



TAAPSEE DISAPPOINTED

Actor Taapsee Pannu is disappointed she will not be able to watch *Laxmmi Bomb* in the theatres

LEISURE

P2



JD(U) CANDIDATES' LIST

Nitish Kumar tries to consolidate his support base while trying to make a dent into RJD's Muslim-Yadav combine

TWO STATES

P7



PLOT FOILED

13 men have been charged with plotting to kidnap Michigan's governor

INTERNATIONAL

P10

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



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SHORT TAKES

State Covid toll nears 1,000-mark

Bhubaneswar: Odisha's Covid-19 tally mounted to 2,46,839 Friday with 2,697 more people testing positive for the infection, while 17 fresh fatalities pushed the toll to 991. Of the 2,697 cases, 1,576 were reported from various quarantine centres, and the remaining detected during contact tracing. Khurda recorded the maximum number of new cases at 482, followed by Cuttack at 234 and Nuapada at 153. Four fresh fatalities were registered in Khurda, three in Balasore, two each in Mayurbhanj and Puri, and one each in Baragarh, Kalahandi, Malkangiri, Nayagarh, Kandhamal and Subarnapur.

China joins COVAX vaccine alliance

Taipei: China, which has four coronavirus vaccine candidates in stage 3 clinical trials, said Friday that it is joining the COVID-19 vaccine alliance known as COVAX. The country signed an agreement with GAVI, the co-leader of the alliance, Thursday, China's Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Initially, China did not agree to join the alliance, missing the global deadline to join in September. Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said in a statement that "we are taking this concrete step to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines, especially to developing countries, and hope more capable countries will also join and support COVAX."

P10

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX			VARIATION
SENSEX	40509.49	▲	326.82
NIFTY	11914.20	▲	79.60
DOLLAR	73.45	▼	₹0.13
EURO	86.44	▲	₹0.18
GOLD	₹50,942	▲	₹767
SILVER	₹62,575	▲	₹2056

WEATHER			
	BHUB	CTK	
TEMP. MAX	32.8°C	34.2°C	
TEMP. MIN	25.0°C	24.4°C	
Humidity	98%	85%	Forecast
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	Generally cloudy sky

RBI holds rates steady; sees fiscal recovery taking root

The monetary policy committee kept the repo rate at 4.0 per cent, while the reverse repo rate stayed at 3.35 per cent

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Oct 9: (PTI) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) left key interest rates unchanged Friday but signalled more easing ahead to support an economy that it sees contracting 9.5 per cent in the current fiscal.

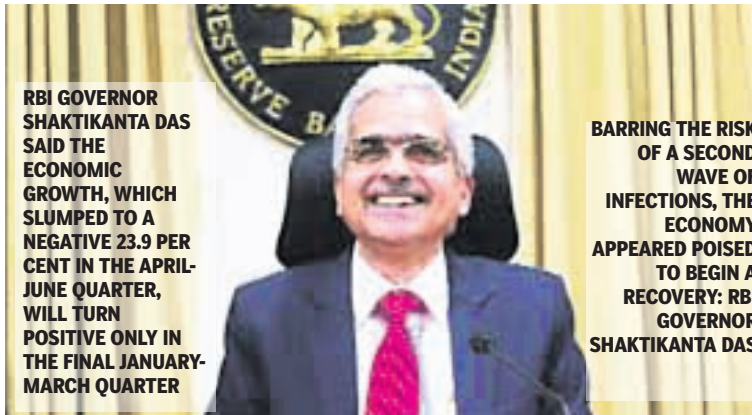
The six-member Monetary Policy Committee, with three newly inducted external members, voted unanimously to retain the benchmark repurchase or repo rate at 4 per cent while keeping its policy stance accommodative, implying it could ease again.

The central bank had slashed the repo rate by 115 basis points since last March before hitting a pause button in August. To bring down borrowing cost, RBI announced a number of unconventional steps, including doubling of the size of open-market bond purchases to ₹20,000 crore, offer to buy state debt, and easing a corporate cash crunch through a ₹1 lakh crore of targeted long-term funds available on tap.

Besides supporting economic activity, the measures are aimed at ensuring the government's record borrowing programme goes through smoothly.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the economic growth, which slumped to a negative 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter, will turn positive only in the final January-March quarter.

"By all indications, the deep contractions of Q1 2020-21 (April-June) are behind us; silver linings are visible in the flattening of the active caseload



RBI GOVERNOR SHAKTIKANTA DAS SAID THE ECONOMIC GROWTH, WHICH SLUMPED TO A NEGATIVE 23.9 PER CENT IN THE APRIL-JUNE QUARTER, WILL TURN POSITIVE ONLY IN THE FINAL JANUARY-MARCH QUARTER

BARRING THE RISK OF A SECOND WAVE OF INFECTIONS, THE ECONOMY APPEARED POISED TO BEGIN A RECOVERY: RBI GOVERNOR SHAKTIKANTA DAS

curve across the country," he said.

Barring the risk of a second wave of infections, the economy appeared poised to begin a recovery, he said, noting food grain production was set for record highs and factories and cities were coming back to life. With macro indicators pointing to a recovery, "GDP growth may break out of contraction and turn positive by Q4 (January-March)," he said.

"For the year 2020-21 as a whole, therefore, real GDP is expected to decline by 9.5 per cent, with risks tilted to the downside," he said, adding that if the current momentum of upturn gains ground, a faster and stronger rebound is eminently feasible.

After the sharp contraction in Q1 of FY21, the MPC expects growth to come in at (-)9.8 per cent in Q2, (-)5.6 per cent in Q3 and 0.5 per cent in Q4. "Against all odds, we shall strive and revive," he

said. In a video live stream, he said RBI will "continue with the accommodative stance of monetary policy as long as necessary – at least during the current financial year and into the next year – to revive growth on a durable basis and mitigate the impact of COVID-19, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target going forward".

The governor noted that the recent pick-up in inflation is due to supply disruption and higher markups during the lockdown. Going forward, as supply chains are restored, inflation could ease to 4.5-5.4 per cent in the second half of FY21. RBI's optimism on the inflation front is based on easing of supply-side disruption, weak demand conditions and bumper Kharif harvest as it expects the retail inflation to decline to 4.3 per cent in the first quarter of FY22.

MORE P11

India test fires anti-radiation missile Rudram-1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 9: In a major milestone, India on Friday successfully test fired a new generation anti-radiation missile from a Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force that can destroy a wide variety of enemy radars, air defence systems and communication networks from large stand-off ranges, officials said.

The missile, Rudram-1, is India's first indigenously developed anti-radiation weapon system and it was test-fired by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), at an integrated test range in Balasore in Odisha at around 10:30 AM, officials said. They said the missile, having a speed of Mach two or twice the speed of sound, is capable of bringing down a wide-range of enemy radar systems, communication networks and air defence systems within a range of up to 250 kilometres.

In a statement, the Defence Ministry said Rudram hit the radiation target with "pin-point accuracy" and that the test established India's capability to develop long range air launched anti-radiation missiles.

The flight testing of the missile comes in the midst of India's bitter border row with China in eastern Ladakh.



Notification released for Balasore, Tirtol by-polls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: The Election Commission has issued a formal notification for the by-elections to the Balasore Sadar and Tirtol Assembly constituencies Friday.

Speaking to reporters here Friday, Chief Electoral Officer of Odisha, Sushil Kumar Lohani said both seats will go for by-poll November 3, while results will be declared November 10.

The filing of nominations has started Friday. October 16 is last date for filing nominations and scrutiny will be done on the following day (October 17), he said.

In view of the pandemic, the Election Commission has taken various measures to ensure smooth and infection-free election. As per the instructions of ECI, only two persons can accompany the candidate during filing of nomination papers and only two vehicles are to be used by the candidate in this regards, the CEO said.

Only five persons, excluding security persons, should accompany the candidate while undertaking door-to-door campaign. They all should wear mask and maintain social distancing. The electorate who have tested Covid positive or are suspected to be infected, will be allowed to cast vote in the last hour of polling.



Public meeting by the political parties will be held in large open places previously identified by the District Electoral Officer with a maximum 100 people, as per the guideline issued by Odisha Disaster Management Authority.

In view of the Covid pandemic, voters per booth has been reduced to 1,000 instead of 1,500, while the number of booths has been increased, he added.

PETROL PUMP EXPLOSION

Human body parts unearthed at blast site

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: The team of Commissionerate police investigating into the petrol pump explosion near the Raj Bhawan, Wednesday, reached the office of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) at Chandrasekharpur in the city Friday to enquire into the reasons behind the mishap.

Speaking to **Orissa POST**, Commissioner of Police Sudhanshu Sarangi informed, "We have collected important documents from the IOCL office to ascertain the work in progress at the accident site during the explosion, number of workers and organisations engaged therein and the detailed procedure generally adopted during such operations. An experts' team of the State Forensic Science Laboratory also visited the spot. It will take some more days to get the scientific examination reports."

The forensic team has been examining the CCTV footage from the hard drive of computers at the petrol pump to check the ongoing work at the spot before the explosion. The team also recovered parts



of a human spinal cord along with some other body parts from spot, Friday.

On the other hand, the family members of Simanchal Parida, the diploma engineer who is missing since the explosion Friday were at spot throughout the day with the grim hope to getting the whereabouts of Parida. They have also lodged a complaint with the Capital police in this regard.

Meanwhile, the PESO authorities told **Orissa POST** that they are in touch with the IOCL authorities and the Commissionerate Police. "We are yet to interrogate the officials of Suryashakti Vessels Private Limited, the Faridabad-based company in-charge of the work at the spot. Parida who was an employee of the firm is still missing.

Servitors advise against reopening Srimandir now

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Oct 9: At least four servitor groups (Niyog) of Srimandir Friday advised the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) not to reopen the 12th century shrine for devotees amid the prevailing situation.

The members of Pratihari, Pujapanda, Suar-Mahasuar and Khuntia Niyogs of Srimandir put forth their suggestions against reopening of the shrine at a virtual meeting with the SJTA chief administrator Krishan Kumar Friday, sources said.

The SJTA chief also consulted five servitor members of Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee on the issue. The temple administration has initiated consulting servitors for reopening Srimandir after the state government began the process to allow people to visit religious places with strict adherence to the Covid-19 guidelines. The SJTA chief would consult the remaining Niyogs of Srimandir from October 12 to 16 before taking a financial decision on the issue, sources said.

According to sources, the Pujapanda, Suar-Mahasuar,

Pratihari and Khuntia servitors suggested that the 12th century shrine should not be reopened for devotees till an effective vaccine is available for novel coronavirus.

The servitors argued that the cases of Covid-19 infection will rise manifold if the doors of Srimandir are reopened for the people amid the prevailing situation. "Rise in Covid-19 infection among the servitors would affect the performance of rituals at Srimandir," they pleaded.

The servitors also urged the devotees to co-operate the temple authorities on the issue. They also urged the



SJTA to take step for providing special care to their colleagues who have tested positive for the deadly virus. Moreover, the servitors also pleaded for a hike in the financial assistance provided to them by the SJTA to compensate the temple shutdown.

Srimandir managing committee member and senior servitor Ram Chandra Dasmahapatra said more than 500 servitors have tested positive for Covid-19, while 18 have died due to the virus infection.

"The state government can reopen other temples for devotees. But, Srimandir should not be reopened for devotees till the end of Hindu month of Kartika," Dasmahapatra added.

SJTA administrator (rituals) Jitendra Kumar Sahu said they will seek the views of all Niyogs of Srimandir on the issue. "The views of all servitor groups would be placed before the Srimandir managing committee before taking any final decision on the temple reopening," he added.

Notably, a few servitors had staged a dharna in front of the shrine a couple of days ago seeking the reopening of Srimandir for devotees.

India gets 2nd set of Swiss bank a/c details

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Berne, Oct 9: India has got the second set of Swiss bank account details of its nationals and entities under the automatic exchange of information pact with Switzerland, marking a key milestone in the government's fight against black money allegedly stashed abroad.

India is among the 86 countries with which Switzerland's Federal Tax Administration (FTA) has exchanged information on financial accounts within the framework of global standards on AEOI this year.

India had received the first set of details from Switzerland in September 2019 under AEOI (Automatic Exchange of Information), when it involved 75 countries.

The information exchange this year involved nearly 3.1 million (31 lakh) financial accounts, FTA said in a statement Friday. The number of such accounts was similar in 2019. While the statement did not explicitly name India among the 86 countries, officials told this news agency that India is among the prominent countries with which Switzerland has shared details about financial accounts of clients of Swiss banks and various other financial institutions.

The officials further said a "sizeable number" relates to Indian citizens and entities in the overall exchange of information about over three million financial accounts by Switzerland this year with 86 countries.

Besides, Swiss authorities have already shared information about more than 100 Indian citizens and entities in the past one year on receipt of requests for administrative assistance in cases involving probes into financial wrongdoings including tax evasion, the officials added.

These cases mostly relate to older accounts that might have been closed before 2018, for which Switzerland has shared details.

Nobel Peace Prize awarded to World Food Programme

THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME WAS HONOURED FOR ITS EFFORTS TO COMBAT HUNGER AND IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR PEACE IN CONFLICT AREAS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Oslo, Oct 9: The Nobel Peace Prize was Friday awarded to the World Food Programme for feeding millions of people from Yemen to North Korea, with the coronavirus pandemic seen pushing millions more into hunger.

The WFP was honoured for "its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving

force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict," Nobel committee chairwoman Berit Reiss-Andersen said on unveiling the winner in Oslo.

Whether delivering food by helicopter or on the back of an elephant or a camel, the WFP prides itself on being "the leading humanitarian organisation" in a world where, by its own estimates, some 690 million people – one in 11 – go to bed on an empty stomach. "With this year's award, the



Norwegian Nobel Committee wishes to turn the eyes of the world towards the millions of people

who suffer from or face the threat of hunger," Reiss-Andersen said.

Founded in 1961, the UN organisation helped 97 million people last year, distributing 15 billion rations to people in 88 countries last year. The numbers are dizzying but only a fraction of the total number in need.

Despite making progress over the past three decades, the UN's goal to eradicate hunger by 2030 appears out of reach if current trends

continue, according to experts. Women and children are usually those most at risk.

War can be caused by hunger; but hunger is also a consequence of war, with people living in areas of conflict three times more likely to be undernourished than those living in countries at peace, the WFP says.

"There's no two ways about it – we can't end hunger unless we put an end to conflict," WFP executive director David Beasley said

September 21.

This is the 12th time the Peace Prize has gone to the UN, one of its agencies or personalities – more than any other laureate.

The virus will also affect the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony on December 10 in Oslo, which has been scaled back due to corona restrictions.

The award consists of a gold medal, a diploma and a cheque for 10 million Swedish kronor (950,000 euros, \$1.1 million).

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today will be a difficult day full of action. You may not agree with your friends about trifling matters, but you will love it. You will complete all work that has been pending, which will give you relief. Ganesha says it is an optimistic day.

TAURUS

This is one of those days when not goes well, warns Ganesha. No matter how hard you try you may not be able to keep problems and difficulties at bay. You may not be pleased or comfortable doing what has been assigned, or required, and could simply sit sullenly, doing nothing.

GEMINI

You know where you are headed, and will redouble your efforts to reach your goals today. You are full of energy and enthusiasm, which helps you to achieve all your targets. You will receive unexpected gains owing to your hard work. Bountiful success will be yours at the end of a hard day's labour, says Ganesha.

CANCER

Sentimentalism will be hinder your path of success. So, says Ganesha, give up too much sentimentalism. It can be quite a hazard in the future. You will win over people with the force of speech and polite approach.

LEO

You will be able to influence people with your co-operative and accommodating attitude today. You will have discussions on various topics with people who come into contact with you. You will also come into contact with people who share the same mental wavelength as you do, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

You will remain engrossed in personal matters at the cost of professionalism. Solve your problems today by taking them head-on. Ganesha warns you not to let your emotions suppress your enterprising spirit, especially in the evening.

LIBRA

Trivialities should be the least of your concerns today. Do not let the small things faze you out. Remember that it is the overall picture that matters, and not one small stroke of the brush. Bear this in mind, since you may come under some pressure from subordinates at your workplace.

SCORPIO

Thank Ganesha that you have the grace to handle pressure at work, because today, you are going to be bogged down with a lot of work pressure. By the end of the day, try some stress bursting activities like yoga, meditation or listening to soft music.

SAGITTARIUS

Take it as a piece of advice: tough times don't last; tough people do. The day has a lot of ups and downs in store for you. However, you are the sailor of stormy seas and would sail through all the troubles easily. Take the advice given by your near and dear ones, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

Your lover is in for many pleasant surprises today. You'll be in a completely romantic mood, making every wish of your sweetheart your command. Both of you will go shopping, and have fun. Extravagant expenditures will keep you charged up for the day.

AQUARIUS

Travelling is on the cards for you today. Ganesha advises you to travel alone, because if you take people with different tastes along with you, their preferences may dampen your mood and spoil the trips. But, once put in such a situation, you will try to adjust yourself and find enjoyment in that, too.

PISCES

Your planetary configuration not being favorable, you are advised not to start any new projects today. The benefits accrued by any project you take up today might not justify the risks associated with it. Businessmen need to be extra careful in all their dealings.



MINDY KALING WELCOMES HER SECOND CHILD

Actress Mindy Kaling has given birth to her second child, a baby boy. Kaling made the announcement during an episode of *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, reports *people.com*.

BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH JOINS SPIDER-MAN 3

English actor Benedict Cumberbatch will reprise his role of the sorcerer superhero Doctor Strange in the third part of the revived *Spider-Man* franchise. Tom Holland returns as Spider-Man in the film.



Taapsee upset for not getting to watch Laxmmi Bomb in theatre

Mumbai: Taapsee Pannu Friday tweeted to express disappointment that she will not be able to watch the Akshay Kumar-Kiara Advani starrer *Laxmmi Bomb* in the theatres.

Taapsee's reaction came shortly after Akshay Kumar posted the trailer of the upcoming horror comedy on his verified Twitter account. The film is set for a Diwali release on an OTT platform.

Reacting to the trailer, Taapsee tweeted: "You have

KILLED IT n how !!!! I'm actually disappointed I'm not gonna watch it in theatres!"

Meanwhile, even as theatre owners gear up to reopen theatres on October 15, a host of films were announced Friday for OTT release, including Varun Dhawan and Sara Ali Khan-starrer *Coolie No. 1*, Rajkumar Rao-starrer *Chhalaang* and Durgavati featuring Bhumi Pednekar.

ANS



Manushi a fan of Bahubali maker Rajamouli's work

Mumbai: Former beauty queen Manushi Chhillar, who is all set to make her Bollywood debut, says she is a fan of the films of director SS Rajamouli, and can watch his works on the loop.

"Rajamouli sir is one of the finest filmmakers of our times and I'm a huge fan of his work. They are simply pathbreaking, and he has given Indian cinema some of the most iconic films to cherish. *Bahubali* and *Magadheera* are my absolute favourite Rajamouli films and I can watch them on loop," Manushi said.

She hopes her hard work is noticed by the visionary filmmaker one day, and she gets a chance to work with him.

"Watching *Bahubali* was an experience that made me want to be a part of these big, grand, fantastical projects that entertain the nation. I can only wish and hope that I work really hard consistently to be able to be a part of such projects in the future," Manushi said.

Manushi is all set to make her Bollywood debut opposite Akshay Kumar in the upcoming film, *Prithviraj*. Directed by Chandraprakash Dwivedi, *Prithviraj* is based on the life of King Prithviraj Chauhan. It stars Akshay as Prithviraj, while Manushi plays Sanyogita, the love of his life.

She will also be seen starring opposite Vicky Kaushal in a yet-untitled film.

ANS

Dilip Kumar-Saira Banu won't celebrate wedding anniversary

Mumbai: Veteran Bollywood couple Dilip Kumar and Saira Banu will not celebrate their wedding anniversary October 11 this year, because they are mourning the recent Covid deaths of his two younger brothers.

Saira Banu announced the decision on Dilip Kumar's verified

Twitter account.

The statement reads: "Message from Saira Banu Khan: Oct. 11, is always the most beautiful day in my life. Dilip Saheb married me on this day and made my cherished dreams come true. This year, we are not celebrating.

You all know we lost two of our brothers, Ahsan Bhai and Aslam Bhai. The unprecedented turmoil due to the Covid-19 pandemic has taken many lives and caused sorrow in many many families. In the current circumstances, we request all of you, our dear friends, to pray for each other's safety and well being. May God be with us all. Stay Safe."

Dilip Kumar, 97, and Saira Banu, 76, tied the knot October 11, 1966. This year would mark 54 years of their wedding.

Dilip Kumar's youngest brother Aslam Khan, who was battling Covid-19, passed away August 21 at the age of 88. The actor's second brother Ahsan Khan succumbed to the virus September 3.

ANS

Neha makes relationship with Rohanpreet official

Mumbai: Amid wedding rumours, singer Neha Kakkar confirmed her relationship with Rohanpreet Singh through an Instagram post Friday.

Neha posted a photograph of singer Rohanpreet and her, and captioned it: "You're Mine @rohanpreetsingh #NehuPreet."

To this, Rohanpreet replied: "@nehakakkar Babuuuuuu I love youuu soooo much mera putt meri jaaaaa YES I AM ONLY YOURS MERI ZINDAGI."

Rohanpreet also shared a similar picture on his Instagram feed and introduced Neha as his 'zindagi'. He wrote: "Meet my zindagi, Neha Kakkar. #NehuPreet."

Their confirmation comes at a time when there are strong marriage rumours. The wedding is expected to take place October 24. In fact, a few days ago, a photo of Neha and Rohanpreet went viral and was rumoured to be from their roka ceremony.

In the image, they are seen sitting together with his parents. Neha, though dressed in casuals, was seen sitting with a large gift bag in her lap.

Rohanpreet was a contestant on the singing reality show *Rising Star* Season 2, and he also participated in *Saregama Lil Champs*. Earlier this year, Rohanpreet was seen as one of the suitors of Shehnaaz Gill in a show *Mujhse Shaadi Karoge*.

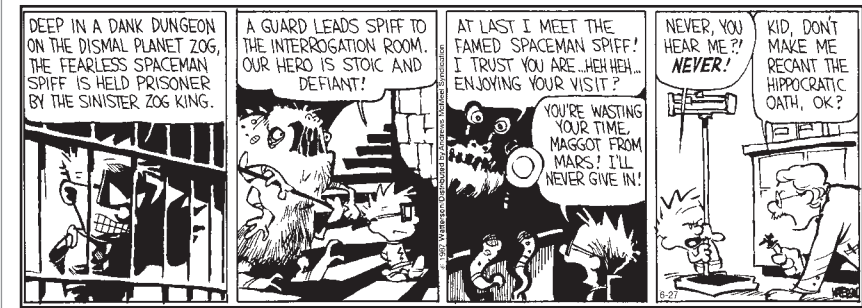
ANS



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

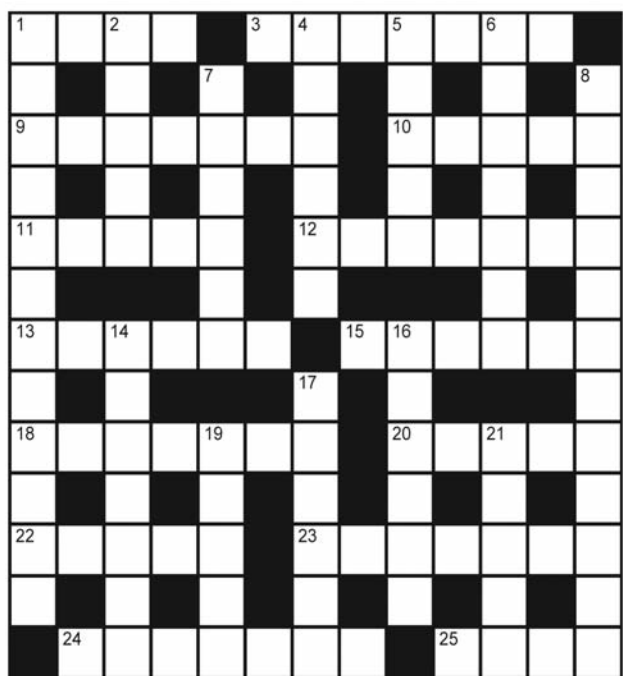


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

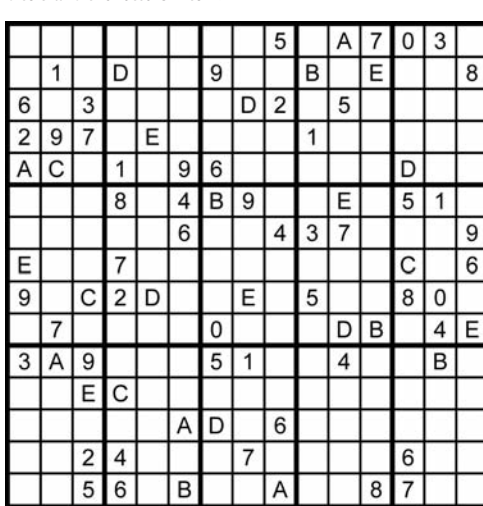


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- Across**
- 1 Minor setback
 - 3 Kind of glassware
 - 9 Bridge type
 - 10 Flooded
 - 11 Down the
 - 12 Habiliments
 - 13 Inherent character
 - 15 Mugs
 - 18 Authentic
 - 20 Summation
 - 22 Farm units
 - 23 Enumerate
 - 24 Kind of penguin
 - 25 Resting places
 - Down**
 - 1 Thief's modus operandi (5-3-4)
 - 2 English race place
 - 4 Landing strip
 - 5 Mentally acute
 - 6 Puzzle type
 - 7 Stringed instrument
 - 8 Plato and Zeno, e.g.
 - 14 Connption fit
 - 16 Steeds
 - 17 Fine wool
 - 19 It's debatable
 - 21 Valparaiso locale

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Covid-19 fatalities near 1,000-mark

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: State's novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) tally mounted to 2,46,839 Friday with 2,697 more people testing positive for the infection, while 17 fresh fatalities pushed the toll to 991, an official of the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

Of the 2,697 cases, 1,576 were reported from various quarantine centres, and the remaining detected during contact tracing, the official said.

Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, recorded the maximum of 482 cases, followed by Cuttack 234 and Nuapada 153.

Taking to Twitter, the H&FW department said, "Regret to inform the demise of seventeen #COVID 19 positive patients while under treatment in hospitals."

Four fresh fatalities were registered in Khurda, three in Balasore, two each in Mayurbhanj and Puri, and one each in Bargarh, Kalahandi, Malkangiri, Nayagarh, Kandhamal and Subarnapur.

As many as 53 Covid-19 patients



died due to comorbidities, said the department.

As many as 36.64 lakh samples have been conducted in the state so far, including 45,169 Thursday.

Six major districts such as Khurda, Cuttack, Ganjam, Puri, Balasore and Sundargarh have so far reported 627 deaths (63 per cent) while Covid tally in these six districts

accounted for 1,14,043 (46.20 per cent). Meanwhile, 3,404 patients recovered from the viral infection, taking Odisha's total recoveries to 2,20,388.

The recovery case in the state now stands at 87 per cent and only 0.4 per cent Covid fatality has been reported till date.

City Covid-19 tally at 24,853

INFECTIONS & DEATHS

Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, recorded the maximum number of new cases at 482, followed by Cuttack 234 and Nuapada 153

Four fresh fatalities were registered in Khurda, three in Balasore, two each in Mayurbhanj and Puri, and one each in Bargarh, Kalahandi, Malkangiri, Nayagarh, Kandhamal and Subarnapur

Khurda, Cuttack, Ganjam, Puri, Balasore and Sundargarh have so far reported 627 deaths (63 per cent), while Covid tally in these six districts accounted for 1,14,043 (46.20 per cent)

With 316 more persons testing positive for Covid-19 in the last 24 hours, the total number of infected persons in the Capital city climbed to 24,853, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) said Friday.

While 232 were local contact cases, the remaining 84 were quarantine ones linked with earlier pos-

Govt misleading people: BJP

Bhubaneswar: The BJP Friday said the state government has been misleading the people about the issue of compensation to be paid to the family members of the deceased Covid warriors. The party admitted that 41 claims of the families of the Covid warriors are pending. But it questioned the state government figures of 60 such applications made to the Centre for compensation. BJP leader Prithviraj Harichandan said, "The government has been misleading the people on the issue of compensation. As per our information, till October 8 there are names of only 47 persons given to the Centre who were said to be COVID warriors."

itive cases, the civic body said.

Meanwhile, as many as 326 patients in Bhubaneswar recovered from the disease in the last 24 hours, taking the total recoveries in the City to 21,214, the BMC said, adding that the active cases in the City now stands at 3,507, while 111 patients have so far succumbed to the viral infection.

LOPAR to bring heavy rain on Oct 11 & 12

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: A fresh low pressure area (LOPAR) formed over Bay of Bengal Friday which will bring heavy rain in some parts of the state during October 11 and 12, said Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre.

The LOPAR now lies over north Andaman Sea and adjoining east central Bay of Bengal with the associated cyclonic circulation extending upto mid-tropospheric levels, the Met Centre said in a bulletin.

It is likely to concentrate into a depression over central Bay of Bengal by Saturday and move west-northwestwards and cross north Andhra Pradesh coast as a depression October 17 morning, it said.

Light to moderate rain or thundershower is likely to occur in most places over south coastal, south interior and north coastal Odisha till Saturday, the Met office said.

Heavy to very heavy rainfall was forecast in some areas of Gajapati, Ganjam, Rayagada, Puri, Malkangiri, Koraput, Kandhamal, Jagatsinghpur, Khurda and Nayagarh districts, Sunday.



Similarly, heavy to very heavy rainfall is also likely to lash some places in Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati, Ganjam, Puri, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Bhadrak and Balasore districts on the next day, the weatherman said.

Strong surface wind with speed reaching 45-55 kmph and gusting to 65 kmph may prevail over central Bay of Bengal during October 10 to 11 and along and off Odisha Coast adjoining northwest Bay of Bengal from October 11 to 13, it said, advising fishermen not to venture into the sea during the period.

Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena has asked district officials to be in a state of readiness. Since sea conditions are likely to be rough, the advice for fishermen must be strictly implemented, he said.

Bio-incubator at ILS soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: Union Biotechnology department Secretary Renu Swarup exuded confidence that biotechnology applications will play an important role in mitigating challenges in most of the sectors.

The innovation ecosystem, promoted by the department and Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council in the recent times has enabled promotion of young entrepreneurs for development of several products and processes in agriculture, healthcare, environment management, devices and many other areas, she said.

She was speaking at the inauguration of a webinar series on 'Insights into Entrepreneurship in Biotechnology' organised by the Institute of Life Sciences, Bhubaneswar, Friday.

She hoped that with the excellent science base, ILS will play a major

The bio-incubator will have advanced equipment and infrastructure facilities for carrying out cutting-edge biotechnology research

role in developing an enabling ecosystem for bio-incubation in the region.

ILS director Ajay Parida mentioned that ILS is in the process of establishing a bio-incubator for nurturing, mentoring and promoting entrepreneurs in biotechnology.

"ILS bio-incubator is being established with support from Union Biotechnology department and the state Science and Technology dept," he added.

The bio-incubator will have all advanced equipment and infrastructure facilities for carrying out

cutting-edge biotechnology research and will focus on cost effective and affordable product development.

In his address, state Science and Technology department secretary Santosh Sarangi spoke about the opportunities in the state for promoting an innovation ecosystem for startups and entrepreneurship in the area of biotechnology.

He stated that Odisha Biotechnology Policy has several action plans to take such initiatives forward and complimented ILS in taking the lead in this important area.

Taslimarraf Syed, CEO, C-Camp, Bangalore and Dr. Vijayraghavan, CEO, Sadguru Consultancy, Hyderabad spoke on the innovation trends in biotechnology and challenges and opportunity for academic spin-offs.

The speakers urged the young researchers and faculties to take advantage of the enormous opportunity for turning research ideas to business opportunity.

REMEMBERING UTKALMANI



People from various walks of life pay tributes to freedom fighter and social reformer Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das on his birth anniversary on the premises Gopabandhu park in Cuttack, Friday

Naveen pays tribute to Utkalmani

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday paid tributes to freedom fighter and social reformer Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das on his 143rd birth anniversary.

Remembering Gopabandhu's selfless service for the people of Odisha, Patnaik tweeted, "Tribute to Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das, one of the most prominent freedom fighters and Panchasakhas. He will always be remembered for his selfless service, his unique creation that enriched the Odia language and literature, and the value of building an educated society."

Gopabandhu Das popularly known as 'Utkalmani' (Gem of Odisha) was born October 9, 1877 in a noble Brahmin family in Suando village located on the banks of Bhargabi River in Puri district. His father was Shree Daitari Dash and mother Swarnamayee Devi.

Five held in confectioner murder case

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: Commissionerate Police Friday arrested five persons in connection with the murder of a confectioner at Samantarapur here October 4.

The accused have been identified as Dillip Kumar Behera, Balambar Behera, Sasmita Behera, Biswajit Barik and Rashmi Ranjan Barik. The accused have been for-



warded to sub-divisional court here Bhubaneswar.

Prabhakar Sahoo, the owner of

a sweet stall at Samantarapur, was hacked to death over business rivalry October 4. Sahoo, a resident of Boudh district, had recently opened a sweetmeat shop at Samantarapur under Lingaraj police limits here.

After Sahoo's death his wife had lodged an FIR with Lingaraj police wherein she alleged that the owners of 'Balambar Sweets', a former employer of Sahoo, were involved in the ghastly murder of

her husband. She told the media that Sahoo used to work at a sweetmeat shop in the same market. However, he was left jobless after 'Balambar Sweets' closed down four-five months back.

Recently, Sahoo had opened his own shop after arranging money from several sources. His wife alleged that the father-son duo of 'Balambar Sweets', was livid with him over the success of his shop.

'Cycles4Change' flagged off

BHUBANESWAR WAS ONE OF THE 95 CITIES IN INDIA TO HAVE REGISTERED FOR THE INDIA CYCLES4CHANGE CHALLENGE

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: Around 1,000 cycling enthusiasts from the Smart City Friday took part in 'Cycles4Change' challenge, a joint initiative of the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL).

The event was organised to pay respect to cyclists and promote cycling as a public transport means in the City.

As a part of the initiative, cyclists from different parts of the Capital city Friday took part in the event—Cyclegiri-Cycles4Change—



and pedalled from Sishu Bhawan Square to Dhauli, a stretch of around 12km.

Bhubaneswar was one of the 95 cities in India to have registered for the India Cycles4Change Challenge, which is an initiative of Smart Cities Mission of the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry to promote cycling.

BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary who was present in the event said that the ini-

tiative aimed at boosting cycling habits among the denizens.

"Bhubaneswar has good scope for cycling on city roads. We already have a vast cycling track and a dedicated public bicycle sharing system. Because of Covid outbreak it went into a dormant phase. Now, we want to revive it and take it to the next level. We want to request the citizens to dedicate every Friday to cycling voluntarily," he said.

During the event, several citizens took the pledge to use cycles at least on every Friday. To pay respect to cyclists a Cyclegiri anthem was also launched. The BMC and BSCL have requested the citizens of the smart city to use the environment-friendly means of transport in the city for a sustainable development of the state capital.

The urban bodies have now planned to make this event as a social movement and continue creating awareness through special campaigns till December 14. Online and offline campaigns have also been planned to mobilise the communities to encourage them to do cycling.

BMC to take over Mo Cycle mgmt

Observing a slump in cycling culture in the city owing to lack of dedicated cycle tracks, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Thursday said that it will take over the management of Mo Cycle from CRUT (Capital Region Urban Transport). Promoting a cycling event 'Cyclegiri', BMC commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary said that the civic body will be working on different aspects including development of cycle tracks and safe passages to passengers. "Truck, bus and car drivers will be asked to take a pledge on how to let a cyclist feel safe on the road while appearing for the driving license test," Chaudhary added. Introduced in 2018 ahead of the Hockey World Cup, Mo Cycle service was rolled out in the city as one of the Smart City initiatives. About 2,000 bicycles were procured by the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited in a phased manner from three private agencies and CRUT was allowed to manage the service. However, owing to lack of dedicated cycle tracks and encroachment of the 11km tracks created for the purpose, the popularity of Mo Cycle was lost. While ridership figures initially were promising, the numbers soon dwindled as denizens lost interest. Observing this, BMC is reported to have taken the decision.

Two more special trains to New Delhi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: Ministry of Railways has decided to run two more special trains towards New Delhi from Bhubaneswar.

The Bhubaneswar-Anand Vihar Weekly Special via Angul-Sambalpur City-Jharsuguda-Rourkela will leave Bhubaneswar at 12:45pm on Saturdays beginning October 17, 2020 and reach Anand Vihar on the following days at 8:50pm. In the return direction, the Weekly Special will leave Anand Vihar at 7:5am on Mondays beginning October 19 and arrive at Bhubaneswar at 4:15pm on the next day.

This train has one First AC, one AC-2 Tier, Five AC-3 Tier, eight sleeper class, two guard-cum-luggage vans in its composition.

FOR TRANSPARENCY



A public hearing in progress at Bhakta Niwas in Puri, Friday, for acquisition of land for the construction of security corridor around Srimandir

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Acharya Vihar-DayalAgency-9437135727, **A.P. Tours and Travel**, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, **Aurobindo Market**-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, **Airport Road**-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, **Anish Infotech**- Tankapani Road-9861341488, **Bapuji Nagar**- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, **Baramunda Rental Colony**-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, **Baramunda Housing Board Colony**-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, **Cuttack Road**-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, **District Center (Chandrasekharpur)**-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, **Forest Park**-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, **IRC Village**-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decor Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, **Janpath-Krupadipal Book Store**-7978646669, **Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises**-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, **Jagannath Mobile Point**- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, **Kanan Vihar**-Auro Electronics-8260697560, **Khandagiri**- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, **KIIT Road**-Jugad Jn-9338545031, **Laxmi Sagar**-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, **Lewis Road**-Spider Web-7809186415, **Metro Satellite City**-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, **Madhusudan Nagar**-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, **Maa Santoshi travels**- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, **Nayapalli**- The Cake Room- 7873660137, **Near Mayfair Lagoon**-Cookiemana-9439491273, **Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels**-9668284823, **Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate**- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, **Net Square**- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, **Priyadarshini Market**-Astro Point-9938134346, **R.N. General Store**-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, **Sahid Nagar**- Maa Communication- 9437353424, **Sahini General Store**- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, **Satya Nagar**-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, **Samantapur**- Download Point-7504557743, **Sailashree Vihar**-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, **Sahed Nagar**-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, **Siripur**-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, **Sushree fashion**- Jagmara-9938714347, **Shree Vision**- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, **Unit-3**-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, **Unit-7**- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, **VSS Nagar**-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, **XIMB Square**-LD Books-9658061373.

Bargarh emerging as new Covid hotspot!

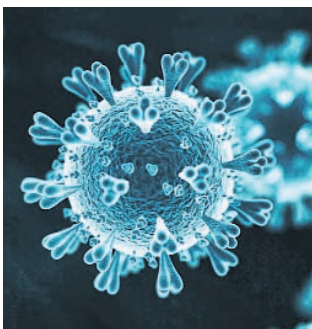
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, Oct 9: With the COVID-19 pandemic showing no signs of letting up in Bargarh district, the district seems to be steadily emerging as the new COVID-19 hotspot in Odisha.

The district Friday reported 86 fresh COVID-19 cases. Sohela block in the district reported maximum cases of 14 followed by Bheden block (12), Atabira block (11), Padmapur block(nine), Bijepur block (seven), Ambabhona block (six), Barpali NAC and Barpali block (five each), Bhatli and Paikamal blocks (four each), Bargarh municipality (three), Jharbandh block (two) and Atabira NAC, Gaisilet block. Ambabhona block and Padmapur NAC (one each).

Informing about the district's COVID-19 situation, district information and public relations officer Kalyani Dash said the district's tally went up to 7,258. So far, 6,429 patients have recovered from the disease and 816 are undergoing treatment. The disease has so far claimed 13 lives in the district, she said, adding that, the district administration is taking all measures to contain the spread of the disease.

Notably, in this district, a man identified as Prahlad Bisi from Rushuda area under Bheden police limits had claimed that he had developed COVID-19 vaccine in September. The district health department had then swung into action and seized some red and blue vials and syringes from his possession.



58 inmates Covid +ve in Sonapur jail

Sonapur: Even as Covid-19 infection cases are increasing in Sonapur district, the deadly virus has made its entry into the district circle jail. The jail authorities and inmates were panicked, a report said.

The report said, the jail has recorded 58 Covid positive cases while the district reported 3230 cases. There are 132 inmates in the circle jail while 58 of them are infected. This has become a cause of concern for the jail authorities. A medical team has been engaged to take care of the patients.

"In this situation, infected inmates and non-infected have been kept in separation so as to ward off further infection," said Satyanarayan Behera, the jail superintendent.

Covid has spread in six blocks of the district while 11 patients have died of Covid in the district.

Manibhadra Puturia dam project faces land hurdle

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Oct 9: Manibhadra Puturia dam project was proposed in Nayagarh with an aim to control flood and facilitating irrigation in 2009. But the fate of this dam project has been stuck in land hurdle since 2011. People in riparian pockets of the Mahanadi and Brutanga villages have been suffering flood devastation every year.

Locals are unsure of the fate of the project and alleged the project has been pushed into cold storage since 2011 due to bottlenecks in land acquisition and shortage of funds. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had laid the foundation of the project January 2, 2009. The dam project was planned for a length of 14 km from Manibhadra hill (under Gania block) to Puturia village in Kishoreprasad panchayat.

Locals said, "Had the project been executed, several panchayats like Kishoreprasad, Gania, Belapada, Rasang, Chhamudia and Badasilinga would have been protected against devastating floods every year." They lamented that a plaque set up during the foundation laying ceremony always reminds them of the project.

Owing to floods from the Mahanadi and Brutanga rivers, people in scores of villages in Rasanga, Chhudia and Badasilinga panchayats have to face unprecedented miseries as they remain cut off from the rest of the world for



People in riparian pockets of the Mahanadi and Brutanga villages have been suffering flood devastation every year

Had the project been executed, several panchayats like Kishoreprasad, Gania, Belapada, Rasang, Chhamudia and Badasilinga would have been protected against devastating floods every year, locals said

days together. Crops are completely damaged. People have long been demanding a dam to control floods in the area.

After repeated agitations by local people, construction work of the dam project started. Work over an 8-km stretch of the dam has been completed while the remaining part of the project has been abandoned as the land acquisition faced much trouble. It could not be carried forward, they lamented.

As for the ill-fated project, executive engineer of the Nayagarh water resources division Rajendra Kumar Mishra and assistant executive engineer of the Dasapalla water resources division Rabindranath Sethi said the work

of the ambitious project was actually started in 2008 and was to be completed in 2013.

"Locals agreed to spare their land for the project, but later some people did not cooperate in this issue. The land acquisition could not be carried forward. By this time, the timeline of the project funded by NABARD had expired. The work could not be completed," they added.

They also pointed out, "In this condition, we are often told about resumption of the project work, but the main problem is shortage of funds. If land is acquired, the project work will be resumed easily. The department has apprised the government about the situation and further funds."

Group clash leaves 20 people injured

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, Oct 9: Twenty people including a forest guard were seriously injured Friday morning in a clash between two groups over use of forest land in Ghadadhanua village under Kosagumuda block in Nabarangpur district.

Sources said, forest officials had called residents of different villages under Kosagumuda block in the district to Ghadadhanua village. They wanted to conduct a meeting in order to allocate forest land equally among the villagers. The discussions turned ugly when an altercation started among the villagers regarding the distribution. Then the arguments snowballed into a violent clash.

It should be stated here that the forest department has launched an afforestation programme in 27 acres of reserve forest land near Ghadadhanua, Kadabhata,

Janiguda, Dangariguda, Kakadaguda and Dhadadhanua villages. It has asked the residents of these villages to use forest produces from the area marked for afforestation. However, the villagers have been at loggerheads with each other over the use of land.

To solve the problem, officials of the forest department had called for a meeting. But they did not expect what followed. The villagers pelted stones and used sticks as they clashed. People were mercilessly beaten up. The violent villagers also attacked the forest guards present at the spot. While most of the forest department personnel fled the spot, one guard could not do so. He sustained serious injuries. He along with 19 other injured villagers was admitted to the district headquarters hospital for treatment.

The forest department later registered two separate FIRs against the villagers at the police station.

Save 'Ammakund' from stone mafia, say locals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Oct 9: Residents of this district have demanded that Ammakund be protected as a tourist destination. Ammakund is located under Khairaput block in Malkangiri district. A large number of people participated in a rally Thursday evening to voice their demands. They staged a protest after coming to know that an Andhra Pradesh-based company has applied for lease to extract stone from the quarry situated near Ammakund.

Residents of seven panchayats participated in the protest rally. They have submitted a memorandum to the local tehsildar to restrain the company or any other entity from extracting stone from sites near Ammakund. People of this tribal dominated district mostly depend on forest produces for their livelihood. The mining area spreads over 600 acres and if allowed, it will affect the eco-tourism spot, some villagers alleged.



Ammakund is rich with natural beauties and water bodies. Tourists from several parts of Odisha and outside through this place for picnic and sightseeing, round the year. If allowed, mining activities will take place on a hill which is situated one kilometre away from Majhiguda village while Ammakund under Mudulipada panchayat is situated about 3.5km from the hill, locals said.

Sambalpur's ODF tag a misnomer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Oct 9: Sambalpur district was declared open defecation free after it achieved 100 per cent toilet coverage under Swachh Bharat Mission, according to official data. The ground reality, however, tells a different story. About 90 per cent of the toilets have allegedly become unfit for use, defeating the purpose of the Swachh Bharat schme.

Talajharan village under Jujumura block can be taken as a case in point. This village was declared open defecation free (ODF) December 31, 2018. On this occasion, the administration had organised a function attended by government officers and members of NGOs. It was then a prestige issue to get the ODF tag. As things stand, it would be a complete misnomer to call this village as an ODF village. A visit to this village will make one believe why it can no longer be an ODF village.

One or two families in the village are presently using toilets. And the rest have no choice but to go either to farmlands or pond banks to relieve themselves.

The villagers alleged that the announcement was nothing but a gimmick of politicians. The masons engaged to construct the toilets were from outside the state. "Neither they nor the administrative officials responded to our queries regarding the design of toi-



lets. They instead would scold us, saying our names would be struck off the list. We were then given a sum of Rs 12,000 each to get our toilets constructed. We were then told that we can invest more to get a toilet of their choice," a villager said.

"Due to substandard construction work, all the toilets developed cracks and subsequently caved in, making them unfit for use. Those who got their toilets repaired are using the ones and there are hardly one or two such families. As we were not aware of the scheme, we were duped," they rued.

Rural water supply and sanitation (RWSS) executive engineer B Routray was evasive. "Earlier, the RWSS de-

partment was entrusted with the scheme. At that time, almost all the toilets were completed. As of now, district rural development department (DRDA) is carrying out the scheme," he said.

Notably, the scheme was launched in the district in financial year of 2013-14. In the first year, only two toilets were constructed. Later, a target for 5,371; 37,111; 51,361; 20,303 and 37,825 toilets was fixed for 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 financial years respectively. And the department informed that the set targets were achieved.

If the department sources are to go by, then as of now, only 250 toilets are under construction.

Man killed, body burnt in Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Oct 9: In a possible sorcery-related killing, some persons murdered a man at the virtually inaccessible Udayagiri village of Padia block on the border of Malkangiri district Thursday night. In their bid to destroy proof, the miscreants burnt the body of the deceased at the village cremation ground.

The deceased has been identified as Baga Kabasi, a resident of Udayagiri village of Kaladapalli panchayat. According to sources, some villagers were of the opinion that Kabasi was into sorcery and black magic. They witnessed Kabasi performing some acts Thursday night. Those acts enhanced their belief that Kabasi was indeed a black magic practitioner.

The villagers called Kabasi out of his house and took him to a remote place where they murdered him in cold blood. They then cremated the body.

ODISHA LIFT IRRIGATION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, L.I. DIVISION, SAMBALPUR
e-mail ID: eeolicbsp@gmail.com
2nd Corrigendum Call Notice No. 2024 Dt.08.10.20
No. CAD-563: Due to some unavoidable technical reason Packages 09 & 10 vide TCN No. 04/20-21 Dt.29.09.2020 could not be uploaded in the tender portal. So the said packages are hereby cancelled.
Sd./- Executive Engineer L.I. Division, Sambalpur OIPR-32142/11/0007/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. B-327
"e" Procurement Notice
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RAYAGADA (R&B) DIVISION NO.-I
Phone/Fax: (06856) 222149, E-mail: eeepwd765001@gmail.com
Bid Identification No. RC (RANDB) RGD 10/2020-21 (Online Tender)
File No. E-II-C8-28/2020 No.5125 Dated: 07.10.2020
1. No. of the Works : 02 (Two) No. of Building Work
2. Estimated Cost : Rs.13,13,576/- and Rs.35,11,973/- (Excluding GST)
3. Cost of Document : Rs.6000/- and Rs.6,000/-
4. Bid Security : Rs.13,200/- and Rs.35,150/-
5. Class of Contractor : 'D' & 'C' and 'C' & 'B'
6. The bid documents will be available in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in from 11.00 hrs. of dated 14.10.2020 to 17.00 hrs of dated 27.10.2020 for online bidding.
7. Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal: Upto 17.00 hrs. of dated 27.10.2020.
8. Bids received "Online" shall be opened at 11.00 hours on dated 28.10.2020 in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Rayagada (R&B) Division No.-I.
9. Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal: "www.tendersodisha.gov.in". Any Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.
Sd./- Executive Engineer Rayagada (R&B) Division No.-I OIPR-34040/11/0007/2021

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No: ST-OT-AMC-PRS-UTS-189 Dtd.: 06.10.2020
Name of the Work: ANNUAL MAINTENANCE SERVICE CONTRACT WORK OF ALL SYSTEM PERIPHERAL UNDER PASSENGER RESERVATION SYSTEM (PRS), UNRESERVED TICKETING SYSTEM (UTS), AUTOMATIC TICKET VENDING MACHINES (ATVM), NATIONAL TRAIN ENQUIRY SYSTEM (NTES), DORMITORY RESERVATION (DR) - RETIRING ROOM RESERVATION (RR) OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF TWO (02) YEARS.
Tender Value : ₹ 58,17,341.80, EMD: ₹ 1,16,350/-, Cost of tender document : ₹ 5,900/- (Including 18% GST).
Bidding start date : 14.10.2020, Tender closing date & time : at 11.00 hrs. of 28.10.2020.
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.irops.gov.in>
Note: The prospective tenders are advised to revisit the website 15 (fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (S&T), Khurda Road PR-292/L/20-21

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. 4122 Date 05.10.2020
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, JEYPORE
NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR CIVIL WORKS IN ODISHA NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Bid Identification No: EERWDJYP – Online - 06/2020-21
No.O-433:- 1) Type of works : Roads. 2) Class of contractor "B & A" Class Contractor (Of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities. 3) Mode of submission of tender : Tender should be submitted online only in <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. 4) Period of completion : 2 months. 5) Period of availability of tenders online/Date & time of bidding online / Date of opening of tender papers : The details are as follows :
Procurement officer Bid Identification No. No. of works Availability of tender online for bidding Date & time of opening of tender in O/o E.E., R.W. Division, Jeypore
1 2 3 4 5 6
Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Jeypore EERWDJYP-Online-06/2020-21 03(Three) Nos. 14.10.2020 at 11.00 A.M. 29.10.2020 upto 5.30 P.M. 02.11.2020 at 11.00 A.M.
6) Bid documents consisting of qualification, information and eligibility criterion of bidders, specifications, the schedule of quantities and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in the website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Jeypore OIPR-25160/11/0006/2021

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT, THQ 160 BN BORDER SECURITY FORCE, MV-03, MALKANGIRI (ODISHA) TELEPHONE NO. 06861-230022
AUCTION NOTICE
A public auction of condemned unserviceable stores will be held on 12th Oct'2020 at 11.00 hrs at Khurda, Odisha and on 15th Oct'2020 at 11.00 hrs at MV-03, Malkangiri, Odisha.
2. For more details please visit www.bsf.nic.in and CPP Portal.
davn 19110/11/0026/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. O-399:-
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, ROURKELA
E Mail-rw_rourkela@yahoo.co.in
SHORT TENDER CALL NOTICE
BID IDENTIFICATION NO.ONLINE-EERKL-05 of 2020-21
1. Name of the work : Road (Periodical Maintenance)
2. Total No. of works : 5 Nos.
3. Estimated cost : Rs.61.00 to 88.00 lakhs
4. Class of contractor : 'B' & 'A' Class
5. Period of completion : Three months
6. Type of tender : Double cover
7. Other details
Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of tender online for bidding
From To
1 Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Rourkela Online-EERKL-05 of 2020-21 12.10.2020 10.00 A.M. 21.10.2020 5.00 P.M.
Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Rourkela OIPR-25067/11/0006/2021

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, BHANJANAGAR - 761126
Phone No. 06821-241026(O)/241079(R), Fax No. 06821-241026/240056
Govt. of Orissa "e" Procurement Notice
No. O-439 Bid Identification No. E.E. RWS&S_30/2020-21
1 The Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bhanjanagar, Ganjam on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in Single Cover System according to the norm of "e" Procurement system in Online mode for providing 100% functional TAP connection for different PWS Schemes in Ganjam district from the eligible contractors as per DTCN
2 Nature of Work Provision of 100% House Connection, Construction of Collection Well ESR, Non-Res. Building & Compound Wall
3 No. of Tender : 14 Nos.
4 Tender Paper Cost : Rs.6000/- to Rs.10000/-
5 Tender Cost : 8.08 lakhs to 78.65 lakhs
6 Class of Contractor :
7 Date and time of availability of bid document in the portal : Dt.13.10.2020 at 11.00 A.M. to 21.10.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.
8 Date of Opening of Bid : Dt.22.10.2020 at 11.00 A.M.
9 Period of Completion : 90 (Ninety) days to 240 (Two hundred forty) days
10 The bidders have to participate in online bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>.
Sd./- Executive Engineer RWS&S Division, Bhanjanagar OIPR-25021/11/0011/2021

Odia lady officer wins 'Earth Heroes Awards'



POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Oct 9: Anshu Pragyan Das, deputy conservator of forests of Mahanadi Wildlife Division at Satkosia Tiger Reserve in Angul district, was conferred Thursday with the prestigious 10th NatWest Group 'Earth Heroes Awards 2020'. She was honoured for her contribution towards mitigating the ill effects of climate change and trying to protect the planet's biological diversity. Das is among the eight awardees from India who were felicitated with the 'Earth Heroes Awards 2020'.

The jury members had shortlisted Das

for her outstanding work in protection of the Satkosia tiger habitat by harnessing the support of local communities. She is also working for the revival of the endangered 'Gharial' species found in the Mahanadi riverine at Satkosia.

The award ceremony is usually held in New Delhi in presence of ministers and other stakeholders. However due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the prize distribution ceremony was organised online.

The eight award winners, including Das, were felicitated in the presence of Assistant Secretary General of United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand and renowned British environmental and climate change activist Nicholas Stern and other dignitaries. Chief Secretary Asit Kumar Tripathy has congratulated Das on her achievement. Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF) and Head of Forest Force (HoFF) of Odisha Sandip Tripathi also lauded the efforts of Das.

Koraput youth feted for 94 push-ups/min

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Oct 9: In a rare achievement, Tukuna Turuk of Koraput entered Asia Book of Records Friday for doing 94 push-ups in one minute.

The youth from Bandikar village in Koraput district is thrilled with the achievement. The B.Tech educated youth said, "I

was keen to stand out of the crowd than to follow it. As I was good at push-ups, I focused on that with concerted effort and the result is here". Turuk is also a bronze-medallist in national-level Taekwondo. "The more we keep ourselves engaged in sporting activities, we can keep ourselves physically fit and have control over our mind," the young man said.

The existence of poverty is the proof of an unjust and ill-organised society, and our public charities are but the first tardy awakening in the conscience of a robber.

SRI AUROBINDO

Transfer travails

Frequent transfer is a fait accompli in government. But Pimpri-Chinchwad police commissioner Sandeep Bishnoi, who was recently transferred, has approached the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) challenging his transfer order. He was moved out from his post in less than a year. He has been succeeded by Krishna Prakash, a 1998-batch IPS officer.

Bishnoi has stated that “such abrupt transfers without justification or valid reason is contrary to law and ought to be set aside.” Bishnoi and Prakash are part of a major reshuffle carried out by the Maharashtra government in which around 50 officials were transferred. Prakash is the third police commissioner of Pimpri-Chinchwad in two years after the state government established the commissionerate in the industrial town, as law and order became a challenge following a rise in the number of street crimes and cases of vandalism. Bishnoi’s predecessor, senior IPS officer RK Padmanabhan, too was transferred before completing two years in office.

RBI PICKS MPC MEMBERS

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had to postpone its much-awaited monetary policy review in the last week of September due to the lack of quorum. The delayed nomination of three government external members to its six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) had led to the unprecedented postponement. Now the RBI has appointed Ashima Goyal, Jayanth R Varma and Shashanka Bhide as MPC members for a period of four years.

The MPC is a statutory committee responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate.

According to the RBI Act, the committee meets at least four times a year and publishes its decisions after each meeting. The meeting can begin only if at least four out of the six members are present. The new appointments were necessitated after the four-year tenure of the three government-nominated members Chetan Ghate, Pami Dua and Ravindra Dholakia ended in August.



BABUDOM BYTES
Dilip Cherian

ADHOCISM IN ACTION

After the heady announcement heralding long-awaited reforms, Indian Railways is moving cautiously on the implementation. Some observers are surprised at the slow pace. From the time when Covid struck and passenger rail traffic almost stopped, the Railways has had plenty of time on its hands to consider its internal rearrangement.

While all posts of Members of the Railway Board are ex-cadre now and should be filled with suitable officers, based on seniority and residual service, the Railway Ministry is edging ahead with great caution. Sources say that the post of Director General of HR (DGGHR) was filled with an Indian Railway Personnel Service (IRPS) officer, even though more senior officers from other cadres are eligible and available. It is also being reported that the post of Member Traffic & Rolling Stock is likely to be given to an officer from the Indian Railways Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE). Similarly, there seems to be a proposal to appoint the Member (Finance) from the Indian Railways Accounts Service (IRAS).

So far so good. But there is some grumbling among the Indian Railways Service of Engineers (IRSE) and Indian Railways Service of Mechanical Engineers (IRSME), which seem to have lost out on apex grade posts to the other services in the new plan. According to sources, the Railway Ministry is still not drafted the Recruitment Rules, which may explain the sense of adhocism prevailing in the ministry’s actions.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let’s multiply the effect.

WISDOM CORNER

- Judge a man by his questions rather than his answers. VOLTAIRE
- Be a lotus flower. Be in the water, and do not let the water touch you. OSHO
- The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials. CONFUCIUS

WORDSWORTH

Turdiform

It’s one of a select class of English words, including crapulent and formicate, that are guaranteed to mislead readers and raise a giggle among children of all ages. Turdiform is an adjective that refers to birds of the thrush family. It comes from Latin turdus for one of the European thrushes, probably the song thrush or mistle thrush (the latter having been given that name because it was noted for eating berries, particularly those of the mistletoe). Turdiform is found exclusively in old-time ornithological works. It has always been specialist and technical; its appearances lie mainly in the period from 1870 to 1910 and it is obsolete. We may guess that a certain fastidiousness on the part of writers has led to their expelling it from their vocabulary. However, the genus Turdus for the thrushes survives. Members include Turdus migratorius, the American Robin (the European robin used to be thought a thrush but is now in a different genus) and Turdus maximus, the Tibetan blackbird.

Turducken

Many of us have heard of this gastronomic marvel, which in the USA is associated with Thanksgiving and to a lesser extent with July 4. A chicken is stuffed inside a duck inside a turkey — the inner two deboned first and themselves stuffed with such delights as sausage, cornbread, or oyster. A culinary chimera, the turducken might be thought to stand on the same level of gustatory invention as the notorious Glaswegian deep-fried Mars bar, though those who have tried it say it’s quite tasty. Some chefs draw away in horror from it, citing the excessive amounts of skin and fat and the high risk of bacterial problems because it is so hard to ensure that all three birds are properly cooked through. This method of cooking is actually quite ancient, with recipes from medieval times that were often much more complicated still. The technical term for the process is engastration, from Greek words meaning “in the belly”. A well-known English example of the nineteenth century was Pandora’s Cushion, a boned goose stuffed with a boned chicken, which was stuffed with a boned pheasant, itself stuffed with a boned quail. If the turducken were not enough, a news article from 1997 said that a store in Louisiana was experimenting with a pigturducken, though nothing has been heard of it since.

LOL

BEING LATE TO WORK

Tom had this problem of getting up late in the morning and was always late for work. His boss was mad at him and threatened to fire him if he didn’t do something about it. So Tom went to his doctor who gave him a pill and told him to take it before he

fact beat the alarm in the morning by almost two hours. He had a leisurely breakfast and drove cheerfully to work. “Boss,” he said, “The pill actually worked!” “That’s all fine,” said the boss, “But where were you yesterday?”



went to bed. Tom slept well and in

SPECTRUM QUAD

Blinking when opportunity beckons

Dr D.K. Giri

QUAD MEETING IN TOKYO SOUNDS PROMISING. THE DETERMINATION SHOWN BY AUSTRALIA, USA AND EVEN JAPAN IS ENCOURAGING. BUT IT IS NEW DELHI’S AMBIVALENT ATTITUDE THAT DISAPPOINTS

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
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FOCUS FOREIGN INVESTMENT

BARKING UP WRONG TREE

Union Minister for Communications, Electronics & Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad, has expressed satisfaction that the number of mobile phone manufacturers in India has increased from two to 60 in the last five years. In parallel, Secretary Ajay Prakash Shawney has said that 90 per cent of the mobile phones being sold in the country are being manufactured here.



Bharat Jhunjhunwala

THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT RUN AFTER FOREIGN INVESTORS AS ADVISED BY THE WORLD BANK. IT MUST INSTEAD THINK THROUGH WHY FOREIGN CAPITAL WOULD COME INTO INDIA WHEN OUR OWN HIGH NET WORTH INDIVIDUALS ARE LEAVING FOR BETTER PASTURES

Further, we have had a stream of media reports saying that electronics majors have submitted proposals to invest large amounts in India. A similar announcement was made in 2015 that these companies will invest 17 billion dollars. These are encouraging statements. However, the electronics majors were already present in India in 2016 when the Make in India programme was launched. Foxconn and Lenovo had given contracts to local companies to manufacture their products in Sri City, Andhra Pradesh and Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu; and Samsung had its own manufacturing facility in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. Question is this: Why have they not expanded in the last five years?

In particular, a production facility of Motorola, a subsidiary of Lenovo, has been lying closed in Chennai. Lenovo has not even restarted its existing plant, let alone making new investment. The announcement made in 2015 that these companies will invest 17 billion dollars has clearly fallen flat. Assocoam has said in a report that the mobile phones being ‘manufactured’ in India are actually only last line assembly just as the homemaker brings flour, pulse and vegetables and cooks a last line meal in the kitchen. This assembly work is not ‘manufacture.’

The objective of Make in India and Atma Nirbhar Bharat schemes is to create self-dependence. These manufacturers continue to be dependent on the import of parts. This grim reality is seen in the electronics imports of 56 billion dollars against exports of mere nine billion dollars in 2018-19. We are nowhere near becoming Atma Nirbhar. The truth is that there has been no progress since 2015.



The main roadblocks are our education system and government regulations. Investments will not come unless we solve these problems just as they have not come after the launch of Make in India in 2016

I studied eight posts regarding the reasons of slow progress of electronics manufacturing in India on the internet. Six of eight posts complained about the unavailability of skilled workers. One post explained that our colleges were asking the students to ‘learn’ the function of the 40 legs in an Intel chip—which they needed to memorise. Then the commenter says: “Even if the student were to become a repair technician, he wouldn’t be required to store the function of each of the parts of the dozens of varieties of chips in his mind. Instead, asking the student how he would use the integrated circuit to create a device would have been a hundredfold more stimulating, constructive, and productive.” Alas! The professors in our government colleges themselves do not know how to use the chips; and have no interest in learning it either because their salaries are secured as long as they churn out certificate-holding useless graduates.

Two of the eight posts complained about the cumbersome regulatory framework. I was told by a manufacturer from Bangalore that the government has recently introduced a requirement that every export consignment would require to be accompanied by a certificate from a chartered accountant. The manufacturer has to now do additional paper work

to get the certificate. This takes an additional two days in delivery.

The government is creating such new roadblocks at every step—the beneficiary of which, one may surmise, is the grease money obtained by the officials. Other reasons mentioned in the posts were legal hurdles in implementation of contracts, cost of capital, high rates of tax and cost of land and electricity. I am not convinced of these reasons.

The government has made a laudable effort and made a scheme to provide 50 to 75 per cent capital subsidy for investments in new electronics manufacturing facilities. This is not going to work. It is like giving oxygen to a person dying from malnutrition. As said above, the main roadblocks are our education system and government regulations. Investments will not come unless we solve these problems just as they have not come after the launch of Make in India in 2016. It must be remembered that our bureaucrats get more opportunities to get grease money in disbursing these subsidies.

Perhaps, the government is being driven by the bad advice given by the World Bank. The Bank and other multilateral agencies like the United Nations are driven by the interests of industrialised nations. The governments of those countries, in turn, are driven by multinational corpora-

tions. These corporations have no interest in developing manufacturing in India. Their objective, on the contrary, is to kill Make in India so that they can supply electronics goods from their plants in Vietnam and Taiwan where there is greater availability of skilled labour and less extortion by the bureaucracy.

Thus, in its recent World Development Report, the World Bank has advised the Indian government to reduce import duties. Interestingly, the World Bank has itself said in the same report that the share of international trade in globally manufactured goods had increased from 43 per cent in 2000 to 53 per cent in 2008 when the global financial crisis took place. It declined to 45 per cent in 2015 after the crisis. Now, it can only further contract after the pandemic. Therefore, the government should not run after foreign investors as advised by the World Bank. The government must instead think through why would foreign capital come into India when our own High Net Worth Individuals are leaving for better pastures?

The government should solve the basic problems of the economy instead of giving capital subsidies. The professors of government colleges do not themselves have practical knowledge. Their salaries are secure. They do not want to teach. Further, the private universities are unable to charge adequate fees to employ competent teachers since the cost of education in the government colleges is less. There is a need to free the government colleges of the decrepit professors.

Secondly, the government must reduce the extortion by the bureaucracy. Thirdly, the government will have to reduce the social divisions in the society and have a constructive dialogue with the Opposition; and improve the environment—water and air in particular. Investments—foreign or domestic—will take place when we provide pleasant living conditions. The present hype about the proposals of foreign investments will certainly prove a pipedream.

The writer is former Professor of Economics at IIM Bangalore.

countries sharing the spirit and the understanding with the Quad could come on board at a later time. Quad can evolve into a security framework that can counter the challenge that the Chinese Communist Party is posing to the world.

The remarks by Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar were astounding. He surprisingly made no reference to the five-month LAC standoff nor did he mention China. Jaishankar said, “The events of 20-20 have demonstrated the imperative for like-minded countries to coordinate responses to the various challenges that the pandemic has brought upon us. As vibrant and pluralistic democracies with shared values, our nations have collectively affirmed the importance of maintaining a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.”

What are the prospects of Quad? China is already rattled by this group. The Chinese leadership has dubbed it as a mini NATO and an exclusive clique. A statement issued by their Foreign Ministry on Tuesday sounded highly critical of the Quad exercise. Beijing tends to bully countries joining the American camp. It has certainly turned aggressive against New Delhi for not

reconciling to Chinese hegemony in the region and its quest for world power status. Beijing has carried a grudge for India giving asylum to the Dalai Lama and sheltering the Tibetan leadership in exile.

The Chinese animosity against India continues for the latter’s attempt to emerge as a power centre in Indo-Pacific. New Delhi moving closer to the USA exacerbates Chinese anger. Strange and incredible that New Delhi couldn’t detect the Chinese attitude towards India despite several anti-India activities it is engaged in. It behaved like the proverbial cat drinking milk with its eyes closed and thinking that nobody is watching.

It is high time New Delhi realised that it could not befriend China anymore and it has to unfriend it sooner than later. China understands the language of power and force, not persuasion, dialogue or consultation. New Delhi continues to suffer from confusion, equivocation and dithering with regard to China. Even now it seems to believe that China will roll back from the border through dialogue.

Quad provides an opportunity for India to make up its power disparity with China in alliance with

other three countries. New Delhi should take greater initiative in formalising and militarising Quad, unless it makes a bilateral security agreement with the US. It seems to be opposed to militarisation of Quad, whereas the US wants to turn it into a security alliance. India’s stance defies understanding as China is already occupying 5,000 sq km of our territory. New Delhi may be calculating that if it moves into military alliances, Beijing might declare a war on India. Precisely for such an eventuality, a military alliance is necessary to defend our territory.

To sum up, Quad meeting in Tokyo sounds promising. The determination shown by Australia, USA and even Japan is encouraging. But it is New Delhi’s ambivalent attitude that disappoints. New Delhi continues to try to be neutral and friendly with both the blocks as it did in the past between USA and USSR with a tilt towards the latter. It tries to do the same between the US and China with a bias towards the former. Will it work?

The writer is Professor of International Relations, JMI, INFA

Waste of tribal funds

Sir, Three different government departments claimed to have spent around Rs 60 lakh to develop a fish yard in Baripada market, taking money from the tribal development funds. Yet, so far, they have completed only a half-built complex to sell ‘Chilika fresh’. This place is around 600km from Chilika lake. The local fish markets thrive here with yards and markets in traditional mode and are growing. But the way the tribal funds meant for their livelihood development are squandered by officials and other vested interests is a matter of serious concern. The tribals earn their livelihood from neither catching nor selling fish. But a set of people are now enriching themselves from the fish business by way of massive pisciculture with support from fishery agencies. Hence such an ubiquitous project failed to strike the minds of anyone. Still we have spent hefty sums in the name of tribal development and then left it half-done! The tribal development department was kept in the dark while implementing this project. Tribals here eke out their livelihood from collection of sabai, sal leaf, bamboo as also from minor forest produce. Besides, several people have been inducted into various jobs in this project. The ZP chairperson, herself from this community, has resented about this waste of money, in a past ZP meeting. But, no one took a serious note.

Janaki Ballav Dash, MAYURBHANJ

Gas for homes

Sir, It’s commendable that the Gas Authority of India has undertaken the task of supplying cooking gas to households through pipes in select cities. The initiative would help consumers on two fronts. First, they need not visit the distributors for getting a refill; and two, there will not be any occasion to ask the delivery man to check the weight. The metered gas supply to individuals will be billed automatically and the users shall not have any tension of shortage or under-weighted cylinders. This sounds good, but who can guarantee the safety of supply? The recent explosion in a filling station in Bhubaneswar has raised our worry on this count. The authorities wake up from slumber only when an accident takes place. The Bhubaneswar incident is said to be the rarest of the rare kind in the history of gas explosion. It’s certainly time for the administration and the petroleum companies to see that no chance is taken to play with the lives of innocent customers.

Sanjib Das, CUTTACK

Will Nitish’s social engineering help NDA?

Bihar CM makes a sagacious attempt to consolidate his extremely backward castes support base while trying to make a dent into RJD’s Muslim-Yadav combine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Oct 9: The list of JD(U) candidates for the Bihar assembly elections bears the unmistakable stamp of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who has made a sagacious attempt to consolidate his extremely backward castes (EBC) support base while trying to make a dent into RJD’s Muslim-Yadav combine.

The EBCs, numerically large but disorganised, have found a pride of place in the list, with 19 candidates drawn from this social segment, nurtured over the years by Kumar as a bulwark against the RJD.

Kumar, as part of his social engineering, zealously courted them through welfare measures like sub-quotas for them in government jobs in an attempt to make inroads into RJD supremo Lalu Prasad’s once solid OBC support base. For years the OBCs had almost voted for the RJD en bloc before Kumar parted ways with the Yadav chieftain.

Even more conspicuous is the candidature of 19 Yadavs, numerically the largest caste group in Bihar who have, by and large, stood rock solid behind the RJD.

Yadav candidates like sitting MLAs Bijendra Prasad Yadav and

Poonam Yadav are old JD(U) hands.

However, new entrants like Chandrika Roy and Jaivardhan Yadav alias ‘Bachcha’ give a clearer idea of the game plan of Kumar, against whom the RJD has been trying to create, with little success, a wave of resentment over the betrayal of mandate a reference to the JD(U) boss winning the 2015 polls in alliance with the RJD but changing course midway and returning to the NDA.

Roy, who has been fielded from his pocket borough Parsa, is the father of Aishwarya Roy, who got married to the RJD supremo’s elder son Tej Pratap Yadav in 2018 but was abandoned by her husband barely six months after tying the knot.

Jaivardhan, who won Paliganj for the RJD in 2015, walked into the JD(U) camp a couple of months ago. His exit seems to have made things too hot to handle for the RJD which has handed over Paliganj to the CPI(ML) as part of a hurriedly cobbled alliance.

Jaivardhan Yadav is the grandson of Congress veteran late Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, a former union minister and the most formidable Yadav leader in Bihar of the pre-Mandal era.



With 18 Yadav and 11 Muslim nominees, the JD(U) also seems to have sought to make a dent into the RJDs famed MY combination, the bedrock of the party’s support base.

The candidature of 12 Kurmis, who are numerically small, is hardly surprising. The community takes pride in the fact that the chief minister is from amongst them. Of strategic importance, though, is party tickets to 15 Kushwahas, numerically the largest among OBCs after the Yadavs.

Kurmis and Koeris, the caste name by which Kushwahas are more popularly known, have been seen as political comrades in arms. Their camaraderie have earned them the sobriquet Luv-Kush in the political parlance of Bihar.

Attempts have been made by RLSP chief and former union minister Upendra Kushwaha to wear away his castemen from the JD(U) but with hardly any success.

Seventeen tickets have gone to the Scheduled Castes, and the party hopes to offset any Dalit backlash caused by the rebellion of Chirag Paswans LJP with the help of Manjhi.

Nineteen candidates happen to be from among the upper castes, to whom the party has sought to reach out with the message that their outright rejection of the JD(U) after it snapped ties with BJP in 2013 notwithstanding, the party cares for all.

In any case, with Kumar returning to the NDA fold, his party hopes to secure the solid backing of the upper castes. Among the upper caste candidates, seven are Rajputs, whom the party has sought to reach out to with the induction of former Union minister Raghuvansh Prasad Singhs son Satya Prakash, who is expected to be accommodated in the legislative council later.

Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, a founding member of the RJD who

enjoyed respect across party lines, had resigned from the primary membership a day before his death from post-COVID complications and a couple of months after stepping down as national vice-president.

The party has also fielded 10 Bhumihars. These include turncoats like Sudarshan Kumar, the sitting MLA from Barbigha, who quit the Congress recently and is the JD(U) candidate from the same seat. Another Bhumihar candidate who has aroused much curiosity is Rajiv Lochan Singh from Mokama, a soft-spoken man with roots in the Sangh Parivar who moves around wearing a tilak and is known by the nickname sadhu baba.

The docile debutant is pitted against multiple-term MLA Anant Kumar Singh, a dreaded figure who was booked under the stringent anti-terror law UAPA last year after a huge cache of arms, ammunition and explosives was recovered from his residence.

Anant Singh had started his political journey in 2005 with the JD(U) and was known to enjoy the confidence of Nitish Kumar. Ahead of the 2015 assembly polls, he burnt bridges with the chief minister when he quit the party saying he was opposed to the proposed tie-up with RJD. The RJD supremo, on his part, claimed during the campaign that he had got Nitish Kumar to act against the Mokama MLA for committing atrocities against a Yadav boy.

Politics is known to make strange bedfellows and Anant Singh has ended up entering the fray as an RJD candidate.

Amid tickets row in Bihar, Congress plans Rahul’s rallies

Congress workers are protesting at the party headquarters in Delhi, alleging nepotism by senior leaders. Some alleged that tickets were sold

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/Patna, Oct 9: Amid growing resentment among different aspirants over the ticket distribution for Bihar Assembly elections, the Congress is chalking out a campaign plan in which Rahul Gandhi will be its star campaigner.

Party sources said that during the three-phase polls, Rahul Gandhi may address six rallies – two in each phase – and one joint rally along with the Mahagathbandhan partners.

The party also plans to reach out to the electorate digitally since Covid-19 scare many prevent people from turning out in large numbers at Congress rallies and other public meetings.

The Congress is contesting 70 seats, including 21 in the first phase.

Tickets for the first phase were announced Wednesday, leading to a lot of resentment among the unsuccessful aspirants. Muslim leaders felt upset in the first phase, not even a single ticket has been given to minorities.

Congress workers are protest-



ing at the party headquarters in Delhi, alleging nepotism by senior leaders. Some alleged that tickets were sold.

While the Congress leadership was dismissive of such protests and allegations, it maintained that the party had a limited number of seats in its quota and hence not everyone could be given a ticket. Those who were left out will be disenchanted, the leaders said.

The state will go to polls in three phases October 28, November 3 and November 7. The counting of votes will take place November 10.

Face recognition tool reunites boy with parents after 5 years



What is DARPAN
DARPAN, the face recognition software, developed by Telangana police, maintains a database of children and persons lodged at various rescue homes across the country

Telangana police, using the face recognition tool to match photographs of missing children with those of children found at various child homes across the country, detected the boy by matching his photos

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Oct 9: Telangana State police’s face recognition tool ‘Darpan’ has helped reunite a missing boy from Uttar Pradesh with his parents after five years.

Som Soni, a resident of Handia

in Allahabad, missing since 2015, was traced at a child home in Assam. Swati Lakra, Additional Director General of Police, women safety, said the boy who was missing since July 14, 2015 was found at the Child Welfare Centre in Assam’s Goalpara district. The

missing boy was found by Goalpara police July 23, 2015 and was sent to the Child Welfare Centre.

“Telangana state police, while using the face recognition tool Darpan to match missing children’s photographs with those of children found at various child homes across the country detected the said boy by matching his photos,” she said.

The Telangana police immediately informed the concerned Station House Officer of Handia police station, Allahabad, who in turn informed the parents of the missing child. They rushed to the Child Welfare Centre and identified their kid. The police official said the Telangana State police played a big role in reuniting the missing child with their parents after five years. Efforts are on to trace as many missing children across India through ‘Darpan’ so as to restore them to their family, she added.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Oct 9: The number of Covid-19 positive cases continued to decline in Telangana as the state reported less than 2,000 cases Friday.

The last 24 hours saw 1,891 new cases across the state. For a second consecutive day the daily count was below 2,000 mark.

The fresh cases pushed the state’s overall tally to 2,08,535. Seven more persons succumbed to the Covid-19, taking the cumulative death toll to 1,208.

The fatality rate declined to 0.57 per cent against the national average of 1.5 per cent.

Officials said the percentage of deaths due to Covid-19 was 44.96 while the remaining 55.04 had comorbidities.

A total of 1,878 people recovered during the last 24 hours, ending 8 p.m. Thursday.

With this the total number of people recovered increased to 1,80,953. The state’s recovery rate jumped to 86.77 per cent while the national average is 85.5 per cent.

The state now has 26,374 active



cases, including 21,801 who are in home/institutional isolation.

Greater Hyderabad reported 285 cases. The state capital continued to register a daily count of less than 300.

Medchal Malkajgiri district recorded second highest number of cases at 195 followed by Rangareddy (175), Nalgonda (128), Karimnagar (97), Warangal Urban

(76), Khammam (72) and Siddipet (64). During the last 24 hours, 53,086 tests were conducted. With this the cumulative numbers have gone up to 34,49,925.

Seventeen government-run laboratories, 44 private laboratories and 1,076 Rapid Antigen test centres are conducting the tests.

According to a media bulletin from the office of the director of pub-

EC doubles broadcast time allotted to parties in Bihar

Each recognised national and regional party will be given a base time of 90 minutes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 9: The Election Commission Friday doubled the broadcast time allotted to recognised political parties in Bihar on Doordarshan and All India Radio during the upcoming state assembly polls in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and the enhanced relevance of ‘non-contact based’ campaign.

Each recognised national and regional party will be given a base time of 90 minutes. The facilities will be available from the regional centre of All India Radio and Doordarshan and relayed by other stations within Bihar, it said.

The additional time to be allotted to a party has been decided on the basis of its poll performance in the last Bihar Assembly election in 2015.

“A base time of 90 minutes will be given to each national party and recognised state party of Bihar uniformly on the regional kendras of Doordarshan network and All India Radio network in Bihar,” the

commission said.

No party will be allocated more than 30 minutes in a single broadcast session.

The period of broadcast will be between the last date of filing nominations and two days before the date of polling in Bihar.

“The Prasar Bharati Corporation in consultation with the Commission will decide the actual date and time for broadcast and telecast. This will be subject to the broad technical constraints governing the actual time of transmission available with the Doordarshan and All India Radio,” the poll panel said.

The parties will be required to submit transcripts and recordings in advance. “In addition to the broadcast by parties, the Prasar Bharati Corporation will organise a maximum of four panel discussions and/or debates on the Kendra/Station of Doordarshan/All India Radio. Each eligible party can nominate one representative to such a programme,” the commission said.

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As budget schools shut, uncertain future haunts teachers

WITH NO SALARIES OR 40-50 PER CENT PAY FOR THE LAST SIX MONTHS, PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS ARE AMONG THE WORST AFFECTED BY COVID INDUCED LOCKDOWN AND ITS CONTINUING IMPACT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Oct 9: With dozens of budget schools in Hyderabad either shutting down or on the verge of closure under the impact of the pandemic, an uncertain future haunts hundreds of private school teachers.

Closure of small unaided schools, often referred to as budget schools, is the latest blow to the teachers, already reeling under unprecedented financial distress since March.

With no salaries or 40-50 per cent pay for the last six months, private school teachers are among the worst affected by Covid induced lockdown and its continuing impact.

Unable to pay rents for the buildings and bear other expenses, dozens of budget schools have shut down over the last few weeks. When the managements themselves are at crossroads, the plight of teachers drawing salaries ranging from Rs 4,000 to Rs 15,000 can be well imagined.

While teachers of aided schools and the major ones with multiple branches are somehow managing with 40-50 per cent salaries, their counterparts in budget schools are struggling for even a square meal.

Some teachers, IANS spoke to, broke down while narrating their woes and pleading for some help from the government. Most of them did not want their identity or that of their schools to be revealed for obvious reasons.

As the schools have not terminated their services, they hope to get back to work once things return to normal.



With her meagre salary of Rs 15,000 at a private school, Tehseen Fatima (named changed on request), a widow, was running the house, looking after her two children and aged parents. The pandemic has shattered her life.

“I never sought help from anybody but for the first time I had no option but to go and stand in a queue for ration distributed by a philanthropist,” she said in a voice choked with emotions.

She, like other teachers at her school, is getting a 40 per cent salary which is insufficient to meet the family’s needs. She wants to offer her services online for some other institution but has no laptop. “If somebody arranges a used laptop

it will be a big favour for us,” said Tehseen.

Still feeling reluctant to speak about their problems, many are suffering in silence. “There is no support system from the government for people like us. There is no one where we can speak about our issues,” lamented Narasing Nayak, a teacher at New St. Maria High School, Falaknuma.

Shabana, a Telugu teacher at a private school in the old city of Hyderabad, has not received salary since March. With 18 years of experience in teaching, she used to draw a Rs 10,000 salary before COVID broke out.

Living in a small rented house in Yakutpura whose roof leaks every time it rains, the family of six are facing a really tough time. Her husband, an electrician at a function

LATEST BLOW

Closure of small unaided schools, often referred to as budget schools, is the latest blow to the teachers, already reeling under unprecedented financial distress since March

In a society where teaching is considered a noble profession and teachers are treated with respect, the pandemic has forced many to seek help from NGOs and philanthropists

Some have been forced to do petty works like selling fruits and vegetables to meet both ends

hall, is also getting half salary for the last six months.

“We have no money to pay the monthly rent and for electricity, water and other day to day expenses. We are struggling a lot and there is no help from any quarter,” said Shabana, 38.

When she approached the school management for salary, they advised her to look for some other job.

“Most of the schools are budget schools and teachers especially at primary and middle school teachers are the worst sufferers. They come from lower middle class backgrounds. Whatever little aid they got during lockdown has exhausted. We are now seeing the full impact of the distress,” said Dr Mazher Hussain, Executive Director of Confederation of Voluntary

Associations (COVA), which extended helping hand to teachers during the lockdown.

Since the managements of budget schools are facing a huge crisis, he said the government should intervene to provide some relief to them by persuading owners of the school buildings to slash the rents.

Stating that this is a problem with multiple dimensions, Mazher cautioned that if it was not addressed it could have disastrous consequences for society. “The students at the budget schools are first generation learners. Since these schools charge a monthly fee ranging from Rs 300 to Rs 1,000 per month, parents from lower middle class had enrolled their children. If these children drop out and slip into child labour it will not be possible to bring them back to schools,” he said.

With parents not paying the fee, the school managements are facing a tough time in paying rent, electricity bill and meeting maintenance expenses not to speak about salaries of the teachers.

Syed Aslam of MK High School in Bandlaguda area told IANS that they are paying 60-70 per cent salaries to teachers taking online classes for students of 6 to 10. “Only 30 per cent of the students are attending online classes as many don’t have smart phones or Internet connection at home. As our school is located in a slum area, we can’t force parents to pay the fee,” he said.

of the day quote

The Congress leaders who have become new Maharajas (royals) are making allegations about land which is with my family for 300 years. If it is wrong to be born into such a family, then I admit my mistake

JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA | BJP MP

The AAP government is taking the lead in fight against air pollution in Delhi-NCR, but the neighbouring states are still not serious about the issue despite it becoming more dangerous due to the COVID-19 pandemic

GOPAL RAI | DELHI ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

Paid tributes to our senior Union Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan ji. Paswan ji will always be remembered as a person with gentle behaviour and for his work related to public welfare. May the grace of God be on him and may his family have the strength to bear this loss

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Couple held

Pune: A married couple was arrested for allegedly abandoning their infant son near a church in Khadaki area of Maharashtra's Pune city, police said Friday. A three to four-month-old boy was found wrapped in a shawl by some morning walkers on Tuesday, following which the police were informed and a case was registered, an official from Khadaki police station said.

Man arrested

Palghar: A man was arrested for allegedly raping a 12-year old girl in Mokhada area of Palghar district, police said Friday. The 30-year-old man, identified as contractor Deoram Bhoys, on Wednesday entered the latter's house in Talyachiwadi when she was alone and raped her, said an official.

Two killed

New Delhi: The driver and his helper were killed in Delhi early Friday in a fatal accident when their truck carrying iron rods rammed into a furniture factory. "The driver Arif Ali and the helper Mumtaz Ali succumbed to their injuries in the accident. Both were residents of Hapur in Uttar Pradesh," said R.P. Meena, DCP South East Delhi. According to police the truck was coming from Anandmai Marg after it left Okhla industrial area at around 4 a.m. and was headed to a warehouse in Haryana's Palwal.

Worker dies

Panaji: One worker died and another was taken ill when ammonia gas leaked at a food processing plant in an industrial estate in South Goa on Friday, police said. The gas leak, which has since been stopped, was reported at the Quality Foods plant in Cuncolim Industrial Estate in the early hours of Friday.

406 water bodies revived in UP

Jhansi (Uttar Pradesh): As a part of the 'One Village One Pond' initiative, Jhansi district in Uttar Pradesh has revived 406 ponds in the past four months. The initiative has also provided employment to about 11,000 migrant workers who had returned to their villages during the pandemic. According to official sources, there are 496 village Panchayats in Jhansi and the work on the remaining 90 ponds is still going on.



The real danger to India isn't that our PM doesn't understand. It's the fact that nobody around him has the guts to tell him

RAHUL GANDHI
CONGRESS LEADER

BOOSTING TOURISM

The Uttar Pradesh tourism department is preparing to give a better experience to tourists in Varanasi during the pandemic. All the venues where entry is allowed only after purchasing their tickets, will now be accessed with just a single ticket



Priest burnt alive over land dispute

RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER ASHOK GEHLOT CONDEMNED THE INCIDENT AND SAID THAT THE MAIN ACCUSED HAS BEEN ARRESTED, WHILE THE OPPOSITION BJP ATTACKED THE GOVERNMENT SAYING THE LAW AND ORDER HAS DETERIORATED AND PEOPLE ARE UNDER FEAR IN THE STATE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Oct 9: A priest died after being set on fire allegedly by five people who wanted to encroach on temple land in Rajasthan's Karauli district, police said Friday.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot condemned the incident and said that the main accused has been arrested, while the opposition BJP attacked the government saying the law and order has deteriorated and people are under fear in the state.

The incident occurred on Wednesday in Bukna village where five accused caught the priest Babu Lal Vaishnav near an agriculture farm and set him on fire after pouring petrol on him. He was admitted in a crucial condition to SMS hospital in Jaipur where he died on Thursday night. "The main accused, Kailash Meena, has been arrested, while another accused was rounded up," Superintendent of Police, Karauli, Mridul Kachhawa, said. The SP said a case of attempt to murder was registered at Sapotra police station and it was converted into a murder case after the death of the priest.

The accused wanted to encroach upon the land of the temple, the police said. Deputy Superintendent of Police Kaila Devi, Mahaveer Prasad,



said that the body was handed over to family members on Friday. The chief minister termed the incident extremely unfortunate and condemnable, and said the guilty would not be spared. "The Rajasthan government is with the grieving family. The main accused in the incident has been arrested and action is being taken. The guilty will not be spared," Gehlot tweeted in Hindi.

Such acts have no place in a civilised society, he said. BJP leaders in New Delhi, including Union minister Prakash Javadekar, cited the ghastly murder to attack the Congress over the recent crimes, including rapes, in the western state. Taking a swipe at Congress leader

Rahul Gandhi, Javadekar said, "Instead of going to different places on political tourism, he should take cognizance of heinous crimes against women and apologise to the people of Rajasthan that their government has failed." Action should be taken against the culprits, he said. "Law and order in Rajasthan has gone for a toss," the minister alleged referring to the Karauli incident.

The BJP leaders in the state charged that the law and order situation has worsened in the state under Congress rule. "There is no fear of law among criminals who are roaming freely under Congress rule. People are living in fear while

criminals have no fear. This is the situation when the chief minister himself is holding the home portfolio," BJP state president Satish Poonia told reporters.

Poonia also formed a three-member committee which will visit Sapotra. "The fact-finding committee comprises Jaipur MP Ramcharan Bohra, party's national secretary and former MLA Alka Gurjar and former state president of Bhartiya Janta Yuva Morcha Jitendra Meena. The committee will visit Sapotra and submit a report to the state president," BJP spokesperson and MLA Ramlal Sharma said.

Condemning the incident, former chief minister Vasundhara Raje said in a statement that the way the crime graph is rising in the state, it is clear that no woman, child, elderly person or Dalit is safe in the state.

"The Congress government of the state should now wake up from slumber and get the family justice by strictly punishing the culprits," she said. Rajasthan Congress chief Govind Singh Dotasra said the police have already caught the main accused. Vaishnav's family members have demanded action against the SHO, investigation by a deputy SP rank official, compensation and government job for a family member.

LALU GETS BAIL, BUT WILL STAY IN JAIL

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ranchi, Oct 9: Former Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad was Friday granted bail in a fodder scam case, but the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) President will remain in jail for his involvement in other cases.

The Jharkhand High Court Friday granted bail to Lalu Prasad in the Chaibasa treasury fraud case. Justice Apresh Singh granted him bail on the ground of spending half of his jail term in the Chaibasa case. He was awarded five years' jail term in the case.

Lalu Prasad has been convicted in four fodder scam cases. In 2013, he was convicted in the first case. He was convicted in three other cases of fodder scam in 2017 and 2018. During the last hearing on September 11, the CBI had opposed the bail plea of Lalu Prasad on the ground that he didn't complete 30 months (half the sentence) in jail. The ex-Bihar CM had contended that he had completed 29 months in jail, which was almost half of his jail term of five years.

Though the veteran leader has got bail in two cases, he will remain in jail for his involvement in the Dumka treasury fraud case, in which he has been awarded two consequent seven-year jail terms. At present, Lalu Prasad is staying at the Kelly Bungalow designated for the Director of the Rajendra Institute of Medical Science (RIMS) in Ranchi.

After his conviction in four fodder scam cases, Lalu Prasad was staying at the paying ward of RIMS, instead of the Birsra Munda central jail on health grounds. He was shifted to the RIMS Director's bungalow due to coronavirus fear. The RJD chief has been in RIMS for over two years now. The BJP had questioned the move to shift him to the Kelly Bungalow. In a separate case, the high court has sought explanation from the jail administration for shifting Lalu Prasad to the RIMS Director's residence.

No garba in Covid times

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Oct 9: The pomp and grandeur associated with Navratri in Gujarat will be largely missing this year as the state government Friday banned organisation of any 'garba' event during the upcoming festival due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The government said it will not allow any type of garba event in the state during Navratri, starting from October 17, and also released a set of guidelines for the festive season, which usually sees large gatherings, a fertile ground for COVID-19 spread.

For the upcoming festivals, the BJP government released standard operating procedures (SOPs) which stress on COVID-19-appropriate behaviour by citizens to curb the infection. No big, medium or small scale garba event will be allowed in the state during the nine-day festival, the government said.

Garba is a popular folk dance of Gujarat and is performed with passion and fervour during the Navratri festival. The government, however, will allow collective prayers to Goddess Durga where number of people should not be more than 200, it said in a release. The time limit of prayers will be of one hour, but nobody can perform garba at such gatherings, it said. Prior permission of government authorities has been made manda-



tory for organisation of community prayer programmes during Navratri.

At prayer gatherings, COVID-19-related norms such as social distancing, covering of face with masks and use of sanitisers will be mandatory, the release said. The government said citizens above 65, children below 10 years, pregnant women and people with comorbidities should avoid participating in any public programme during the festivals.

Navratri is one of the most popular festivals of Gujarat and is called the longest dance festival of the world. Revellers dance to the tune of traditional music and songs for nine nights. The government said event such as burning of effigies of Ravana, Ramliya yatras, rallies, melas (congregations), exhibitions would not be allowed during the festive season (from Navratri to Diwali).

It advised people to celebrate festivals like Dussehra, Durga puja, Diwali, Gujarati New Year, Bhai dooj and Sharad Purnima at their homes with their families. In the SOPs, the government said up to 100 people can attend functions such as marriage and the same number will be allowed at funerals. During any event, the organisers will have to do floor marking with minimum distance of 6 feet, it said. Thermal scanners are compulsory at Navratri community prayers and other events, the release said.

ON CLOUD NINE



Newly-recruited Punjab police personnel jubilate after taking oath during Passing Out Parade in Jalandhar, Friday

Covid effect: Top court seeks NCPDR response

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 9: The Supreme Court Friday issued notice to the National Commission of Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR) on the condition of children in protection, juvenile and kinship homes in the country in the backdrop of Covid-19.

A bench of Justices L Nageswara Rao, Hemant Gupta and Ajay Rastogi sought response from the NCPDR, while taking suo moto cognisance of the letter, issued by the child rights body, which directed eight states, having 70 per cent of children in care homes, to facilitate restoration of children to their families. The bench has slated the matter for further hearing on October 24. During the hearing, the bench noted that a general direction would not be sufficient in the matter, in the backdrop of multiple aspects.

Bhima Koregaon case: NIA files chargesheet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 9: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Friday filed a chargesheet against eight people, including activists Gautam Navlakha and 82-year-old Father Stan Swamy, for their alleged involvement in inciting a mob to violence in Bhima Koregaon near Pune on January 1, 2018, officials said. Swamy, who said he has never been to Bhima Koregaon, was arrested from his home in Ranchi on Thursday evening and brought to Mumbai where he was produced before a court Friday and remanded to judicial custody till October 23.

He is possibly the oldest person to be charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), officials said. Barring one person - Milind Teltumde who is absconding - all other named in the charge-sheet for allegedly conspiring against the government are in judicial custody. NIA spokesperson and Deputy Inspector General of Police in the agency Sonia Narang said the charge-sheet was submitted before a designated court here.

Besides Navlakha and Swamy, the others named in the chargesheet are Delhi University associate professor Hany Babu, Goa Institute of Management professor Anand Teltumde, and Jyoti Jagtap, Sagar Gorkhe and Ramesh Gaichor, activists of the Bhima Koregaon Shaurya Din Prerna



The NIA chargesheet against the eight does not mention human rights activist Sudha Bharadwaj, who has been in jail since 2018

Abhiyaan group.

They were arrested during the course of the investigation into the violence on January 1, 2018 in which one person was killed and several injured after clashes at the 200th anniversary celebrations of the Battle of Koregaon near Pune. Navlakha and Teltumde had surrendered before the NIA in April this year.

The NIA chargesheet against the eight does not mention human rights activist Sudha Bharadwaj, who has been in jail since 2018. She was arrested by Pune Police in the case along with Vernon Gonsalves and Arun Ferreira in August 2018. Swamy's lawyer Sharif Shaikh said his client was produced physically before the court. "The NIA did not seek his custody. He is aged. We will peruse the papers and file for a bail," he said.

Writer fumes as jeweller refuses to speak in Marathi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 9: Marathi writer Shobha Deshpande staged nearly a 20-hour protest here after a city-based jeweller allegedly refused to speak in Marathi and asked her to leave his shop where she had gone to make a purchase.

The jeweller Friday apologised to the veteran writer, who had staged the protest overnight on the footpath outside his shop since Thursday.

Deshpande was later taken to a hospital for a medical check-up by the police.

The Raj Thackeray-led Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) backed the protest by Deshpande and warned the jeweller, Shankarlal Jain, that he will not be able to open his shop till he learns Marathi. MNS workers also allegedly slapped Jain.

Deshpande said she had gone to the jewellery shop in Colaba, south Mumbai, to buy earrings.

During their conversation, the author insisted that Jain speak to her in Marathi.

His shop is in the capital of Maharashtra whose language is Marathi and he must know how to speak Marathi.

"He said he cannot speak Marathi. I was speaking in Marathi and he did not." "Since I did not speak in Hindi, he refused to sell me the earrings. He arrogantly asked me to leave the place, Deshpande alleged.

The jeweller Friday apologised to the veteran writer, who had staged the protest overnight on the footpath outside his shop since Thursday. Deshpande was later taken to a hospital for a medical check-up by the police

The writer said she demanded that the jeweller show the licence required to run the shop, but he refused.

"When I called the police, they too took the jeweller's side. Then I staged the protest," Deshpande alleged. Jain on Friday morning apologised to the writer, who staged dharna for nearly 20 hours before being taken to the hospital.

Meanwhile, the MNS workers, who had arrived at the spot to express solidarity with Deshpande, were seen slapping the jeweller as he apologised to the writer.

"We were here to support the writer. We taught the jeweller a lesson for being arrogant. We have made him apologise. He will not be able to open shop until he learns Marathi," MNS leader Sandeep Deshpande said.

REACHING OUT

Mayawati wooing Brahmins in a big way

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Oct 9: The beleaguered Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has decided to reach out to the Brahmin community in Uttar Pradesh to make up for the party's shrinking electoral base.

BSP president Mayawati has asked senior party leaders to launch a "Brahmin Jodo" campaign from 'Navratri' this month. The party is holding meetings at all district levels with five top party leaders in every district working out the modalities of the campaign.

Brahmin leaders in the BSP have

been asked to lead the campaign, irrespective of their seniority in the party. The party general secretary Satish Chandra Mishra is managing the campaign at the state level. He has already held meetings with district leaders from all 75 districts of the state. In eastern Uttar Pradesh, the BSP plans to project former minister Ranganath Mishra and Bhisim Shankar Tiwari as the Brahmin leaders while central Uttar Pradesh, the responsibility will be given to BSP MP Ritesh Pandey, former ministers Antu Mishra and Nakul Dubey.

The party is frantically looking



for a Brahmin face in western Uttar Pradesh since one of its senior most leaders, Ramvir Upadhyay has moved towards the BJP. A senior BSP

leader said, "Behenji (Mayawati) wants to repeat the 2007 experiment when Dalits and Brahmins joined hands to usher in the party's first majority government.

"We are reaching out to Brahmins who are decidedly upset with the BJP after the Vikas Dubey encounter. We plan to assuage the feelings of the community and bring them into the BSP fold." Meanwhile, for the first time, Mayawati will be addressing virtual rallies to connect with Brahmins in every district. She will also connect with the Muslim leaders in a similar manner.

of the day quote

Pleased to meet Chairman HCNR
@DrabdullahCE. A good discussion on our bilateral cooperation and regional issues. Welcomed his insights and perspectives on recent developments. As a neighbour, India remains committed to peace, prosperity and stability in Afghanistan
S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

Instead of going to different places on political tourism, Rahul Gandhi should take cognizance of heinous crimes against women and apologise to the people of Rajasthan that their government has failed
PRAKASH JAVADEKAR | UNION MINISTER

Officials must develop industrial areas at sub-division levels to expand the scope of investment in the state. The development of industrial areas at the sub-division level will encourage more and more entrepreneurs to invest
ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

SHORT TAKES

Tiger kills farmer

Lakhimpur Kheri (UP): A 65-year-old farmer was attacked and killed by a tiger in Manjhara Purab forests under the north Nighasan forest area of Dudhwa buffer zone, officials said Friday. The partially eaten-up body of Pyare Lal was recovered on Friday from inside the dense jungles. This is the second successive attack by a big cat in Manjhara Purab forests. On Sunday, farmer Gyan Singh, 65, was killed by a tiger in similar circumstances when he ventured into the forests to bring back his cattle.

Two cops injured

Thane: Two policemen, including a junior officer, were injured in an attack Friday morning by a murder convict who was hiding in a forest after jumping parole here in Maharashtra, an official said. The injured personnel were members of the Crime Branch Unit-I of the Thane police and had gone to nab the murder convict, Navnath Gangurde (34), who attacked them with a chopper (a sharp-edged weapon), senior inspector Nitin Thackeray said.

Four arrested

Jabalpur: Four persons, including two women, were arrested here in Madhya Pradesh for allegedly kidnapping a four-month-old tribal boy and trying to sell him in Mumbai, police said Friday. The accused included a couple and an aunt of the infant, who has been rescued, district superintendent of police S Bahuguna said. The accused were identified by the police as Rampyari Bai Barkade (40), the aunt of the boy, Sanjay Pandey (44) his wife Sharda (42) and Ranu Sharma (36), a resident on Madhya Pradesh's Narsinghpur district.



Starting next week the state government will rope in AYUSH doctors in providing treatment to COVID-19 patients with mild to moderate symptoms

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

MINOR QUAKES HIT MANIPUR, ARUNACHAL

Minor earthquakes shook Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh Friday, causing panic among people though no loss of life or property has been reported so far, officials said



HERE I GO



A participant shows his skills during a water sports event organised by Jammu and Kashmir Police at Dal Lake in Srinagar, Friday

PTI PHOTO

Bengal couple sells baby for ₹4,000

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Oct 9: Parents of an eight-months-old girl child sold her off for just ₹4,000 in West Bengal's Midnapore district due to severe monetary crisis amid the continuing pandemic that hit the nation eight months back, police said.

Police said preliminary investigation suggested that the family was dealing with acute poverty during the Covid-19 outbreak that started livelihood opportunity crisis with repeated lockdowns since March.

During the interrogation the parents admitted that it became really difficult for them to make both ends meet owing to almost no-income. The incident was reported from Harijon Pally area in the district. Police said later the uncle of the infant somehow managed ₹4,000 and got her back home on Thursday from the person she was sold to. He handed over the baby to the officials of state child welfare department.

KANPUR GIRL FOUND DEAD

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 9: In a mysterious case that is giving headaches to the Delhi Police, a 25-year-old girl went missing from Delhi's Kashmere Gate on Sunday morning after she accompanied her mother to the Capital on a trip from her hometown Kanpur.

Two days later, she was found hanging from a tree in a forest in Himachal Pradesh's Solan district. According to the police, Mansi told her family she had to appear in a competitive exam in New Delhi on Sunday and hence came to Delhi along with her home-maker mother.

However, leaving her mother alone, the girl went to check her examination centre at Mori Gate but never returned. An FIR in this context was lodged at the Kashmere Gate police station.

Security of Hathras victim's kin tightened

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hathras (UP), Oct 9: Sixty security personnel have been deployed and eight closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras installed at the house of a Dalit woman, who was allegedly gangraped and killed, in her village in Bulgarhi area here to ensure the safety of her family members, police said Friday.

DIG Shalabh Mathur, who has been sent to Hathras from Lucknow as a nodal officer, said that if needed a control room will also be established there. "Sixty personnel, including women, have been deployed on 12 hours shifts for the security of the victim's family. A gazetted officer will also be deployed to monitor these personnel. With the help of CCTV cameras, the house of the victim will be monitored round-



the-clock," he said. Hathras Superintendent of Police (SP) Vineet Jaiswal said that a register of visitors is being maintained by policemen at the entry of the house.

Two security personnel have been provided to each family member and witness for their personal security, he said, adding that a team of fire department and two local intelligence unit personnel are also deployed there. "At the main gate of the house, a metal detector has

been installed and quick response teams are also in place. With the help of eight CCTV cameras, security is being ensured," the SP said.

The 19-year-old Dalit woman was allegedly gangraped on September 14 following which she was admitted to the J N Medical College Hospital in Aligarh with serious injuries. She was referred to Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital on September 28 after her condition showed no signs of improvement.

Active cases dip below 9L, recoveries cross 59L

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 9: India's COVID-19 tally of cases went past 69 lakh with 70,496 infections being reported in a day, while active cases of infection fell below 9 lakh after a month, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated Friday.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 69,06,151. The death toll climbed to 1,06,490 with 964 people succumbing to the disease in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed. The total recoveries have surged to 59,06,069 pushing the recovery rate to 85.52 per cent, while there are 8,93,592 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 12.94 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

The COVID-19 case fatality rate due to the coronavirus infection was recorded at 1.54 per cent. India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on September

5. It went past 50 lakh on September 16 and crossed 60 lakh on September 28. According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 8,46,34,680 samples have been tested up to October 8 with 11,68,705 samples being tested on Thursday. The 964 new fatalities include 358 from Maharashtra, 101 from Karnataka, 68 Tamil Nadu, 63 from West Bengal, 45 from Uttar Pradesh, 42 Andhra Pradesh and 37 from Delhi.

A total of 1,06,490 deaths have been reported so far in the country includes 39,430 from Maharashtra followed by 10,052 from Tamil Nadu, 9,675 from Karnataka, 6,245 from Uttar Pradesh, 6,128 from Andhra Pradesh, 5,653 from Delhi, 5,439 from West Bengal, 3,741 from Punjab and 3,538 from Gujarat. The health ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities. "Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website.

Virus can survive on skin for 9 hrs: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

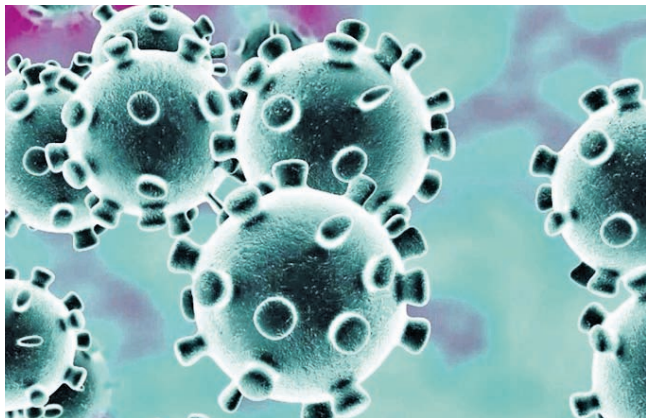
New Delhi, Oct 9: The SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19, may linger on human skin for nine hours, much longer than the flu viruses can, according to a study.

The influenza A virus (IAV), in contrast, remained viable on human skin for nearly two hours, said the researchers including those from Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine in Japan.

The study, published in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases, found that both the viruses were rapidly inactivated on skin with a hand sanitiser. The finding underscores the importance of hand washing or using a sanitiser to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The researchers noted that the stability of SARS-CoV-2 on human skin remains unknown, considering the hazards of viral exposure to humans. "We generated a model that allows the safe reproduction of clinical studies on the application of pathogens to human skin and elucidated the stability of SARS-CoV-2 on the human skin," the researchers wrote in the journal.

They evaluated the stability of SARS-CoV-2 and IAV, mixed with culture medium or upper respiratory mucus, on human skin surfaces. The researchers also evaluated the disinfection effectiveness



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They evaluated the stability of SARS-CoV-2 and IAV, mixed with culture medium or upper respiratory mucus, on human skin surfaces. The researchers also evaluated the disinfection effectiveness

on skin of 80 per cent ethanol against SARS-CoV-2 and IAV.

The study found that SARS-CoV-2 and IAV were inactivated more rapidly on skin surfaces than on other surfaces such as stainless steel, glass and plastic. The survival time was significantly longer - 9 hours - for SARS-CoV-2 than for IAV (1.82 hours), according to the researchers.

Goyal gets additional charge of Consumer Affairs Ministry

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 9: A day after the demise of Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan, President Ram Nath Kovind has given the additional charge of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution to Railway Minister Piyush Goyal.

"The President of India, as advised by the Prime Minister, has directed that Piyush Goyal, Cabinet Minister, be assigned the charge of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, in addition to his existing portfolios," said a communique from the President's office.

Earlier, the Union Cabinet met and condoleed the demise of Paswan, and also observed silence for two minutes in memory of the late



leader. The Cabinet approved a state funeral for Paswan and passed the following resolution: "The Cabinet expresses profound sorrow over the sad demise of Ram Vilas Paswan, Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution. In his passing away, the nation has lost an eminent leader, a distinguished parliamentarian and an able administrator."

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

THEATRE ADAPTS TO STRANGE TIMES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 9: The longing for his sick mother waiting at home in Guwahati tugged at Raju Roy's heart but the call of the stage, which was also the only way he could pay for her medicines, held him back.

After seven long months away from stage, Roy had managed to grab the lead role in "Pehla Satyagrahi", the National School of Drama's first theatrical production since the lockdown was announced in March and the actor just couldn't give it up. "I was hungry for the stage. I was hungry to get a role in anything and then suddenly I got this opportunity," Roy said.

Being back on stage was the elixir he had been waiting for. Yes, it was



a very different experience - for the audience and the cast - but then if this what the times called for he was up for it. Temperature checks to enter the campus, segregated seating for the strictly limited number of people allowed and mandatory face masks made for an unconventional theatre experience.

"It was unusual, but theatre prepares us for the unusual," Roy said. Earlier this month, the Central government further eased restrictions under its unlock guidelines and allowed live performances at open theatre facilities with strict dos and don'ts. NSD made its 'debut' in the COVID era with 'Pehla Satyagrahi'

being staged at the campus lawns for three days beginning October 2 to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's 151st birth anniversary. It was also the among the first plays to be staged in the new normal.

Live theatre is considered a superior form of acting because the reaction of the audience is instantly delivered to the actors on stage and there are no repeats. Be it a collective sigh or a few smiling faces, the actors can read the audience and measure their response.

"Yes, it felt a bit strange to not get that reaction from the audience that we are used to," said Roy but he soon adapted. "For theatre actors the number of people shouldn't matter. I have once acted in front of two people," he added.

Megha Kumari, one of those who watched "Pehla Satyagrahi", found "something lacking" because she couldn't sit next to her friends.

"Even though you are not supposed to talk during a show, a quick glance or a quiet nudge delivers the message to your friend. I think being able to communicate with your friend just adds to the entire experience of a play, even if it's non-verbal," said the college student who sat six feet away from her friends.

The National School of Drama, India's premier theatre institute, has plans to stage plays every alternate weekend at its campus, director-in-charge Suresh Sharma. Adjusting to the changing times is the only way theatre can return to the people.

of the day quote

The tests, and the reason we're increasing tests, is we're testing two universes--the normal statewide testing, which is what we've been doing, and then testing just in the hot spot ZIP codes

ANDREW CUOMO | NEW YORK GOVERNOR

We are moving towards a truce soon even if the situation (Nagorno-Karabakh conflict) is still fragile

EMMANUEL MACRON | FRENCH PRESIDENT

Brexit negotiations this week have made progress in some areas but differences remain on important issues

DOMINIC RAAB | BRITISH POLITICIAN

SHORT TAKES

'Death sentence for rape'

Dhaka: The Bangladesh government has planned to introduce capital punishment in rape cases as protests have erupted across the country over the recent incidents of sexual violence against women. Law Minister Anisul Huq told bdnews24 Thursday that a proposal for the legal amendment will be placed at a cabinet meeting October 12.

Honour killing in Pakistan

Lahore: In a suspected case of honour killing, a 17-year-old girl was shot dead allegedly by his brother after she eloped with a boy in a village in Pakistan's Punjab province. The girl was in love with a boy from her village in Sattukatia, a low-income thickly populated area, and recently she eloped with him.

Nirav's remand extended

London: Fugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi was Friday further remanded in custody during a routine call-over hearing held via videolink at Westminster Magistrates' Court in London. At the next hearing, the court will be presented with arguments to determine the admissibility of the evidence provided by the Indian authorities.

N Korea plans for military parade

Seoul: North Koreans wearing medical masks have gathered in the capital of Pyongyang, state media reported this week, ahead of what is expected to be a big military parade Saturday, possibly featuring the country's latest ballistic missiles. The holiday marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea.

Delta to hit Louisiana

Washington: Hurricane Delta, which has now strengthened into a Category 3 storm, was growing more powerful and threatening to hit the US state of Louisiana Friday, prompting mass evacuations, according to officials. "It is very clear that Southwest Louisiana is going to get more of a punch from this than we would like to see, for sure, because we're still trying to recover from Hurricane Laura," CBS News quoted Governor John Bel Edwards as saying in a statement Thursday. He added that President Donald Trump has approved the state's request for a federal emergency declaration.



If the infections in the Kathmandu valley continue to increase at this rate, hospitals will not be able to support the burden

JAGESHWAR GAUTAM | NEPAL HEALTH MINISTRY SPOKESMAN

PRINCE HARRY, MEGHAN TEAM UP WITH MALALA

Prince Harry and his wife Meghan are joining activist Malala Yousafzai in a video chat about the challenges girls face in accessing education amid the coronavirus pandemic



Plot to kidnap Michigan Gov busted, she rebukes Trump

Thirteen men, seven of them associated with an anti-government militia group called the Wolverine Watchmen, have been arrested



AGENCIES

Detroit, Oct 9: Thirteen men, seven of them associated with an anti-government militia group called the Wolverine Watchmen, have been arrested on charges of conspiring to kidnap the Michigan governor Gretchen Whitmer, attack the state legislature and threaten law enforcement, prosecutors said Thursday.

Prosecutors said the conspirators discussed recruiting a force of 200 supporters to storm the state capitol building in Lansing and take hostages, but later switched to a plan to kidnap Whitmer at her vacation home.

At a news conference, Whitmer accused Trump of fomenting political extremism, citing his comments during last week's US presidential debate against Joe Biden in which Trump declined to condemn white supremacists and instead called for members of the Proud Boys to "stand back and stand by."

"When our leaders meet with, encourage and fraternise with domestic terrorists they legitimize their actions, and they are complicit," Whitmer said. Trump lashed back at Whitmer on Twitter late Thursday, saying the governor "has done a terrible job" and casting her as being ungrateful to his administration. "My Justice Department and Federal Law Enforcement announced... today that they foiled a dangerous plot against the Governor of Michigan. Rather than say thank you, she calls me a White Supremacist," Trump wrote. Biden weighed in with his own

statement, accusing Trump of "giving oxygen to the bigotry and hate we see on the march in our country."

Internal U.S. security memos in recent months have warned that violent domestic extremists could pose a threat to election-related targets, a concern heightened by political tensions, civil unrest and foreign disinformation campaigns.

FBI Director Christopher Wray said in September that his agency was conducting investigations into domestic extremists, including white supremacists and anti-fascist groups.

The FBI became aware through social media in early 2020 of groups discussing the "violent overthrow" of multiple state governments and used confidential sources to track their movements, according to court records. The six men named in the federal complaint - Adam Fox, Barry Croft, Ty Garbin, Kaleb Franks, Daniel Harris and Brandon Caserta - could face life in prison if convicted on charges of attempting to kidnap Whitmer.

Fox and Croft, in particular, discussed detonating bombs as a diversionary tactic, "and Fox even inspected the underside of a Michigan highway bridge for places to seat an explosive," Andrew Birge, U.S. attorney for the western district of Michigan, told a briefing.

Pak bans TikTok

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Oct 9: Pakistan's telecom watchdog Friday banned the popular Chinese video-sharing app TikTok after getting numerous complaints against its "immoral" content.

The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) said in a statement that a "number of complaints from different segments of the society" were made "against immoral/indecent content" on TikTok.



The regulator took the step after a "final notice" was given to TikTok to comply with the instructions for development of an effective mechanism for a proactive moderation of its unlawful online contents, it said. However, TikTok failed to comply with the instructions which forced the PTA to ban it in the country. The watchdog said that it was open for engagement with the mobile application's parent company and would review its decision if a mechanism was developed to moderate the content as per the earlier instructions.

TikTok, owned by China's ByteDance, has been in crosshairs worldwide. The Indian and the US governments have already banned it over security concerns.

MASSIVE BLAZE



A mixed-use high-rise residential building is engulfed by a fire in Ulsan, South Korea

REUTERS

China joins COVAX alliance for global distribution of vaccines

AGENCIES

Beijing, Oct 9: China has officially joined the World Health Organisation's (WHO) COVAX alliance to equitably distribute COVID-19 vaccines around the globe, ending speculation that it plans to supply them on its own to developing countries to improve its image dented by the pandemic since it emerged in Wuhan in December last year.

According to the WHO, countries should join the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX Facility) by September 18 but not later than October 9 with upfront payments. "On October 8, China and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, signed an agreement, officially joining COVAX," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said in a statement on Friday.

"This is an important step China has taken to uphold the concept of a shared community of health for all and to honour its commitment to turn COVID-19 vaccines into a global public good," she said, apparently refuting reports that China plans to distribute the vaccines to developing countries on its own ahead of developed countries. Hua later told a media briefing that China is finalising the modalities of its participation with officials of Gavi and agreed to buy 15 COVAX vaccines to administer them to the Chinese population.



China has been in communication with COVAX parties and will purchase vaccine for 15 million people in China, this is based on the consensus reached by both sides and this is a good result for both, she said.

"Purchase of this percentage only accounts for one per cent of the national population but it demonstrates our support to the programme," Hua said, adding that any larger purchase by China to cover its 1.4 billion population would deprive the vaccine opportunity to people from a number of countries.

WHO announced in August that "172 economies are now engaged in discussions to potentially participate in COVAX, a global initiative aimed at working with vaccine manufacturers to provide countries worldwide equitable access to safe and effective vaccines, once they are licensed and approved."

'nCoV broke out in world's various parts last year'

China Friday claimed that the coronavirus broke out in the various parts of the world last year but it was the only one to have reported and acted first, refuting the widely-held view that the deadly contagion originated in Wuhan before turning out to be a pandemic. China, besides denying the US allegations that COVID-19 has emerged from a bio-lab in Wuhan, also rejected that it emanated from a wet market in the central Chinese city from bats or pangolins before infecting humans. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told a media briefing that "the coronavirus is a new kind of virus as more and more facts emerge as reports reveal, we all know that the epidemic broke out in various places in the world at the end of last year, while China was the first to report the outbreak, identified the pathogen and shared the genome sequence with the world." Hua's comments came in response to US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's allegations of a cover-up by the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC).

Virus measures strand almost 3 mn migrants: UN

THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA HAD THE MOST STRANDED MIGRANTS, WITH 1.26MN STUCK, FOLLOWED BY ASIA AND THE PACIFIC WITH 977,000



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Geneva, Switzerland, Oct 9: More than 2.7 million migrants who wished to return home have been stranded abroad because of restrictions put in place to fight the coronavirus pandemic, the United Nations said Friday.

The world needs to urgently step up cooperation to allow people to return in a safe manner despite the coronavirus constraints, said the UN's International Organisation for Migration.

The IOM warned in a report that border closures and travel bans had left large numbers of migrants stranded.

It defined stranded migrants as people outside their country of habitual residence who wanted to re-

turn home but were being prevented by restrictions related to the pandemic. IOM chief Antonio Vitorino urged countries to do more for the roughly 2.75 million people stuck in limbo.

"The scope and subsequent enforcement of tens of thousands of mobility restrictions, including border closures and nationwide lockdowns related to Covid-19, requires states to reach out to their neighbours and to migrants' countries of origin to address their needs and vulnerabilities," he said in a statement.

IOM said it had calculated the 2.75 million figure from official sources on known cases up to July 13 of migrants stranded abroad in need of assistance, including food, water, shelter and repatriation.

They include seasonal workers, temporary residence holders, international students, migrants who travelled for medical treatment and seafarers.

The Middle East and North Africa had the most stranded migrants, with 1.26 million stuck, followed by Asia and the Pacific with 977,000.

There were a further 203,000 in the European Economic Area and Switzerland, and 111,000 in North and Central America and the Caribbean, it found.

"Large underestimation" Based on data from 382 locations in more than 101 countries, it "is considered a large underestimation of the number of migrants stranded or otherwise impacted by Covid-19", IOM said.

The IOM said it had received requests to assist nearly 115,000 stranded migrants to return home safely and voluntarily, and had been able to do so for more than 15,000 of the most vulnerable in recent months.

"Once stranded, some migrants are at a higher risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect," it warned.

"The loss of livelihoods can increase vulnerabilities and expose them to exploitation by criminal syndicates, human traffickers and others who take advantage of these situations."

The organisation said that too often, migrants were excluded from national coronavirus response and recovery plans due to their irregular status.

of the day quote

This September, our power demand was higher than September 2019. So the growth started again. Despite the fact that Covid problem lingers, the growth in our power consumption and demand has started

RK SINGH | POWER AND NEW & RENEWABLE ENERGY MINISTER

The number of folios and funds mobilised in September was higher than August, and the redemption amount too came down. This indicates that while there are investors who chose to book profit given the surge in the equity markets, there are set of investors who have started to invest in markets

HIMANSHU SRIVASTAVA | ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, MANAGER RESEARCH, MORNINGSTAR INDIA

The priority for most companies in 2020 is keeping the lights on, so data centre growth is generally being pushed back until the market enters the recovery period. However, hyperscalers will continue with their global expansion plans due to continued investments in Public Cloud

NAVEEN MISHRA | SENIOR RESEARCH DIRECTOR, GARTNER

SHORT TAKES

Jio waives post paid security fee

New Delhi: Reliance Jio has waived security fee deposit for postpaid customers who switch to its network from rival mobile service providers, a company official said Friday. The company will offer the same credit limit to the customer what it offers to its existing subscribers, the Jio official said. "Reliance Jio has now announced first-ever 'carry forward of the credit limit for postpaid customers of other operators joining Jio PostpaidPlus plans, at absolutely zero cost," the company official said.

Adani Gas cuts CNG, PNG prices

New Delhi: Adani Gas Friday cut CNG and piped cooking gas prices in various geographical areas in sync with the recent reduction in natural gas rates. Rates have been reduced in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Gujarat, the company said in a statement. CNG price has been reduced by ₹1.75 per kg in Khurja in Uttar Pradesh to ₹52.60 and that of piped cooking gas (PNG) to ₹25.72 per cubic meter from ₹26.83.

Grinding unit goes on stream

Chennai: Ramco Cements Ltd Friday said it has commenced operations at its new cement grinding unit in Odisha, set up at a cost of about ₹710 crore. It was decided to set up the unit in Odisha, considering the State's high industrial potential, besides being a key market for the company. Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik, who took part in the ground breaking ceremony in 2017 formally inaugurated the plant Thursday, the city based company said.

UK prepares jobs support

London: The British government Friday is set to announce further support for firms to retain staff in the coming months if they are forced to close as a result of the imposition of further lockdown restrictions.



RBI's move to extend co-lending scheme to NBFCs and HFCs may infuse additional liquidity, but the realty sector might not get benefit due to strict due diligence norms and eligibility criteria

SATISH MAGAR | NATIONAL PRESIDENT, CREDAI

MOTOROLA PARTNERS WITH FLIPKART

Motorola has partnered with e-commerce marketplace Flipkart to launch its global-first range of smart home appliances for Indian consumers. Available from October 15, during Flipkart's Big Billion Days sale event, the product range comprises smart refrigerators and smart air-conditioners



Bankers, experts hail central bank's growth-oriented policy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 9: Bankers and financial experts Friday hailed RBI's policy, saying the decision to keep the key repo rate unchanged is an accommodative approach to manage inflation while keeping growth as target, amid the current economic conditions.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) evaluated domestic and global macroeconomic and financial conditions and voted unanimously to leave the repo rate unchanged at 4%, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said in his policy statement for the bi-monthly monetary policy review.

It also decided to continue with the accommodative stance of monetary policy as long as necessary – at least during the current financial year and into the next year – to revive growth on a durable basis and mitigate the impact of COVID-19, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target going forward.



ward. "Today's policy statement by RBI is a perfect exposition of doing 'whatever it takes' to revive growth," SBI chairman Dinesh Khara said. Given the expectation of inflation to stay elevated and a GDP contraction of 9.5% in 2020-21, RBI has done the right thing by announcing "discretion-based" policy responses rather than being "rule based", he added. Bank of India's chief executive AK Das said the retail and small business segments will also have better prospects by measures,

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DINESH KUMAR KHARA | CHAIRMAN, SBI

such as, rationalisation of risk weight for housing loans, enhancement of regulatory retail cap and co-lending with NBFCs/HFCs.

Punjab National Bank's MD and CEO SS Mallikarjuna Rao welcomed the ₹1 lakh crore targetted long term repo operations and said it will support the economic growth. Friday's monetary policy was as aggressively accommodative as possible without cutting the policy rate, said Abheek Barua, Chief Economist, HDFC Bank.

"Given the stance, there is a significant probability of a rate cut in February, if not in December itself as inflation, as we expect, moderates. Has the RBI gone overboard in its effort to support growth? We think not. "These are unprecedented times and the Indian economy's revival efforts are hobbled by the lack of adequate fiscal support. If monetary policy does have to do the heavy lifting, it cannot do it within the confines of a conventional take-no-risks framework," Barua said.

M-cap of BSE-listed cos zooms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 9: Total market valuation of all listed companies on the BSE rose to a new high of ₹160.68 lakh crore on Friday following a bullish sentiment in the equity market.

Extending its gains for the seventh straight session – the longest winning streak in almost a year – the 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 326.82 points or 0.81% to close at 40,509.49. During the week, the Sensex advanced 1,812.44 points or 4.68%. Tracking gains in the broader market, the market capitalisation of the BSE-listed companies zoomed to ₹1,60,68,725.10 crore at close of trade Friday.

Stock market benchmarks rallied on Friday as financial stocks advanced following the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) accommodative policy stance and steps to



boost liquidity to the banking sector. The benchmark repurchase (repo) rate has been left unchanged at 4%, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said while announcing the decisions taken by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).

"Markets are trading currently at their peak, aided by fast recovery of economic activities and increased rural demand.

"Over the week, benchmark indices have ascended to new high supported by restoration of industrial activity near pre-COVID-19 level,

good start to Q2 result, in anticipation of stimulus in India and positive monetary measures by MPC," Vinod Nair, head (research) at Geojit Financial Services.

He added that global markets remained positive throughout the week, as corporate deals and transactions revived in spite of an increase in COVID-19 cases.

ICICI Bank was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rising 3.64 per cent. Axis Bank, State Bank of India, HDFC Bank, Larsen and Toubro, ONGC and Infosys were among the other major gainers.

RIL is the country's most-valued firm with a market valuation of ₹15,10,436.34 crore, followed by Tata Consultancy Services (Rs 10,56,277.53 crore), HDFC Bank (Rs 6,78,991.98 crore), HUL (Rs 5,02,534.84 crore) and Infosys (Rs 4,71,751.13 crore).

US imposes tariffs on aluminum sheet from India

REUTERS

Washington, Oct 9: The United States is imposing new tariffs on \$1.96 billion worth of aluminum sheet products from 18 countries after determining that the goods were being dumped, US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said Friday.

The tariffs were being immediately imposed on countries including Germany and Bahrain, even though the department's determination that there was dumping was preliminary, he told Fox Business Network.

Brazil, Croatia, Egypt, Greece, India, Indonesia, Italy, Oman, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan and Turkey were also affected, he said.

Centre allows export of certain varieties of onion

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 9: The Centre Friday decided to give partial relief to onion exporters by easing restrictions on certain varieties of the staple for foreign shipments.

In a tweet, Minister for Railways and Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal said: "Empowering farmers and increasing their income, the government permits export of Bangalore Rose and Krishnapuram onions of up to 10,000 MT each."

Accordingly, 'Bangalore Rose' and 'Krishnapuram' varieties up to 10,000 MT each can now be exported, subject to certain conditions.

"The export shipment of 'Bangalore Rose' onions shall be allowed only through the Chennai port and export to be completed by March 31, 2021," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

"An exporter shall have to get a certificate from the Horticulture Commissioner, government of Karnataka, certifying the item and the quantity of 'Bangalore



Empowering farmers and increasing their income, the government permits export of Bangalore Rose and Krishnapuram onions of up to 10,000 MT each, tweeted Piyush Goyal

Rose' onions to be exported. On 'Krishnapuram' variety, the DGFT mandated that exporters need to get certificates from the Assistant Director, Horticulture, Kadapa, government of Andhra Pradesh, certifying the quantity of onions for export purposes.

ONGC sees ₹6,000-7,000 cr loss on gas biz



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 9: India's top oil and gas producer ONGC Friday said it is losing ₹6,000-7,000 crore on natural gas business after the government-mandated rates for the fuel dropped to a decade low.

The government-mandated rates are way below the cost of production of \$3.5-3.7 per million British thermal unit. Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) Director (Finance) Subhash Kumar said.

Every dollar reduction in gas price leads to a revenue loss of about ₹5,200 crore and a ₹3,500 crore on profit. "Our losses will be in the order of ₹6,000-7,000 crore in current fiscal," he said.

ONGC has been incurring losses on the 65 million standard cubic meters per day of gas it produces from domestic fields after the government in November 2014 introduced a new gas pricing formula that had "inherent limitations" as it was based on pricing hubs of gas surplus countries such as the US, Canada, and Russia.

The price, according to this formula, is revised twice a year and the rate for the period beginning October 1 has been cut by 25% to \$1.79 per mmbtu.

He, however, hoped the government will act on the firm's request and a floor price would be set to check losses.

ONGC Chairman and MD Shashi Shanker said the current gas price does not cover cost and the company has made representations to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for suitable amendments to the formula.

PVs retail sales in state rise 14% y-o-y in Sept: FADA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 9: Automobile dealers' body the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) said that the passenger vehicle (PV) retail sales in September witnessed year-on-year (y-o-y) increase of 14.43% to 4,584 units, amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

FADA said that automobile sector sold around 4,584 units in September as against 4,006 unit sale from same period of previous fiscal. On other hand, 2-wheeler segment showed de-growth by 20.83% on a y-o-y basis, 3-wheeler by 55.13% and commercial vehicle (CV) sale was down by 26.65% during the same month. However, tractor registrations saw positive growth by 25.76%.

Two-wheeler registrations in Odisha totalled 39,193 in September



as compared to 49,502 in same month of 2019. The three-wheeler segment saw 984 registrations compared to 2,193 in the year-ago period.

Similarly, CVs witnessed a downswing in September. About 1,731 CVs were sold in September as against 2,360 sales in 2019, showed FADA's data.

In all, the vehicle categories in the state registered de-growth in September as the Indian economy continues to battle with Covid-19

'India's already-high inflation likely climbed further in Sept'

Persistent high prices have hurt the recession-stricken economy, which contracted a record 23.9% in April-June despite the RBI cutting its key repo rate

REUTERS

Bangalore, Oct 9: Retail inflation in India likely rose further above the central bank's medium-term target last month as food prices climbed due to lingering supply disruptions, a Reuters poll found, reducing the chances of another interest rate cut. Persistent high prices have hurt the recession-stricken economy, which contracted a record 23.9% in April-June despite the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cutting its key repo rate by a cumulative 115 basis points since the pandemic started.

Although the government has eased some lockdown restrictions to help the economy, supply chain

disruptions have shown little sign of abating as the virus continues to spread rapidly in India.

The October 6-8 Reuters poll of 47 economists suggested consumer prices rose 6.88% last month from a year ago, its highest in five months and faster than August's 6.69% rate.

If realised, inflation would be above the top end of the RBI's medium-term target range of 2%-6% for the sixth consecutive month.

"An acceleration in food inflation and ongoing virus-related supply disruptions have kept headline CPI inflation higher than we had anticipated, but price pressures should ease soon," said Shilhan Shah, senior India economist at Capital Economics.



Above-average rainfall this year, a key determinant of yields in farming, is predicted to help reduce food-price pressures over the

coming months. But inflation running above target is expected to keep the RBI on the sidelines for the rest of this year, despite expecta-

tions the Indian economy will mark its first full-year contraction since 1979 this year.

The Indian government appointed

THE OCTOBER 6-8 POLL OF 47 ECONOMISTS SUGGESTED CONSUMER PRICES ROSE 6.88% LAST MONTH FROM A YEAR AGO

THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT APPOINTED THREE NEW EXTERNAL MEMBERS TO THE MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE MONDAY AFTER DELAYING THE LATEST POLICY-SETTING MEETING

three new external members to the Monetary Policy Committee Monday after delaying the latest policy-setting meeting, which is scheduled to conclude later Friday.

"We expect the RBI to remain cognizant of the price pressures but maintain their accommodative stance especially as it is food-led. Rate cuts will be delayed but not denied," said Rini Sen, India economist at ANZ.

The poll also forecast that industrial output fell for the sixth month in a row in August, with a 7.5% decline, its longest falling streak since June 2009, as infrastructure output, which accounts for about 40% of total industrial production, contracted 8.5%.

KXIP TAKE ON KKR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Oct 9: Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) will have to play out of their skins to get their stuttering campaign back on track when they face fancied Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the IPL here Saturday.

Smarting from a 69-run drubbing at the hands of Sunrisers Hyderabad, it will not be an easy task for a struggling KXIP side to stand up to the challenge thrown by an all-round KKR team, which



is a fine blend of youth and experience.

Following five losses and a solitary win, KXIP are currently placed at the bottom of the table with two points, whereas the Knight Riders are fourth with six points from three wins.

Notwithstanding a couple of reverses, KKR are gradually emerging as a strong contender for a third IPL title, with many of their players striking form as the tournament approaches the half-way stage.

And then there is Andre Russell, who has not set the tournament

ablaze in the manner in which he is expected to. The biggest cause of concern for KKR is the form of their captain Dinesh Karthik, who is yet to contribute anything substantial with the bat.

In pace bowling, they have the young duo of Kamlesh Nagarkoti and Shivam Mavi, besides the seasoned World No.1 Pat Cummins. While in spin, Narine has Varun Chakravarthy for company. KXIP will again rely on their trusted opening pair of captain KL Rahul and Mayank Agarwal. If Chris Gayle recovers from his food poisoning, he will make his first appearance in the ongoing IPL and that will be a huge boost for KXIP.

The mis-firing Glenn Maxwell is likely to make way for Gayle. Nicholas Pooran's exploits with the bat is a positive for KXIP.

Death bowling is a major concern for KXIP and they would need to get it right against a strong KKR batting line-up.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Oct 9: Chennai Super Kings (CSK) will take on

Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in an intriguing mid-table IPL clash here Saturday with both teams battling inconsistency.

CSK batsman Kedar Jadhav's selection will be under the scanner after his failure in the defeat to Kolkata Knight Riders. The CSK sank to a 10-run loss Wednesday, choking inexplicably with Jadhav's approach to batting attracting criticism from all quarters.

It remains to be seen if the CSK opt to jettison the 35-year-old given the team's propensity to give players a long rope.

Despite Shane Watson finding his range in a 10-wicket win over Kings XI Punjab and Faf du Plessis' consistency at the top, the middle order continues to remain a concern for CSK with skipper MS Dhoni himself not being at his best.

If they do decide to bench Jadhav after his prolonged struggle, they have the option of recalling Ruturaj Gaikwad or picking N Jagadeesan, who has been warming the bench



since the 2018 season.

While worries remain on the batting front, the CSK bowling has got better and they did well to restrict KKR in the previous game with influential all-rounder Dwayne Bravo returning to his wicket-taking ways.

Karn Sharma, who came in for Piyush Chawla did well to pick up a couple of wickets while not going for too many runs and the skipper will expect him to do the same against a formidable RCB batting unit.

Yet, Dhoni would prefer the pacers - Deepak Chahar, Sam Curran and Shardul Thakur - to provide early



breakthroughs and stem the run flow. However, the CSK bowling will be up against a strong RCB batting line-up led by captain Virat Kohli, and they will look for an improved performance.

Kohli aside, young Devdutt Padikkal has looked in good touch, while AB de Villiers has been a key player for RCB over the years. If the big-hitting Aaron Finch can provide a rapid start at the top, it would serve RCB better.

It is the bowling which would worry Kohli. Leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal has, as always, been the lead-

VIRU SLAMS CSK

New Delhi: Former India opener Virender Sehwag has taken a dig at Chennai Super Kings' faltering IPL campaign, saying that some of their batsmen think of the franchise as a 'government job' in which remuneration is assured irrespective of performance. Chasing 168, veteran opener Shane Watson struck his second successive fifty to give CSK a perfect start Wednesday, but the team choked at the back end of the innings and was restricted to 157 for five to suffer its fourth defeat in five matches. "It should have been chased down. But the dot balls played by Kedar Jadhav and Ravindra Jadeja didn't help," Sehwag told 'Cricbuzz'. "And, in my view, some of the batsmen think of CSK as a government job, whether you perform or not, they know they'll get their salary anyway," he added.

ing bowler while Washington Sundar has been frugal upfront.

However, the pacers have not lived up to their reputation, with the likes of Umesh Yadav, Mohammed Siraj and Navdeep Saini leaking runs. Experienced Sri Lankan Isuru Udana's inclusion has given a semblance of control towards the end of the innings.

Delhi outwit Royals



Marcus Stoinis (C) is congratulated by his teammates after dismissing a Royals batsman; Shimron Hetmyer looks on after playing a shot in Sharjah, Friday

AGENCIES

Sharjah, Oct 9: Delhi Capitals (DC) moved to the top of the league standings after scripting a comprehensive 46-run win in their IPL encounter against Rajasthan Royals (RR) here, Friday. DC have now 10 points from six matches, two ahead of second-placed Mumbai Indians, while RR are stranded at seventh position with four points.

Put into bat, DC posted 184/8 in their 20 overs, thanks to Shimron Hetmyer (45, 24b, 1x4, 5x6) and Marcus Stoinis (39, 30b, 4x6). In reply, RR were bowled out for a paltry 138 with two balls to spare. Kagiso

Rabada (3/35) was the pick of the bowlers and he was ably supported by Stoinis (2/17), R Ashwin (2/22), Axar Patel (1/8), Anrich Nortje (1/25) and Harshal Patel (1/29).

Royals failed to set momentum from the very beginning of their chase, losing wickets at regular intervals. Rahul Tewatia (38, 29b, 3x4, 2x6) was the top scorer for them, with only three other players - Yashasvi Jaiswal (34, 36b, 1x4, 2x6), skipper Steve Smith (24) and Jos Buttler (13) - reaching double figures. The highest partnership - 41 runs - was forged between Jaiswal and Smith for the second wicket.

Earlier, an aggressive bowling

display coupled with some good fielding saw Royals restrict DC to what looked like a below-par 184/8. This was the lowest first innings total at the ground this season.

Desperate to snap their three-match losing streak, RR opted to field and the bowling unit delivered with Jofra Archer (3/24) taking three wickets and spinner Rahul Tewatia (1/20) and Kartik Tyagi (1/35) capturing one each.

The two run outs of the dangerous Shreyas Iyer (22) and Rishabh Pant (5) also proved crucial. Hetmyer played a wonderful innings to be the top scorer. Stoinis too chipped in.

Archer was the pick of the bowlers



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, Oct 9: A little more than four years ago in Paris, Iga Swiatek beat Sofia Kenin 6-4, 7-5 in the third round of the French Open junior event.

"I remember I lost. I don't remember how I played," Kenin said when asked about the only encounter between the two. "But definitely I can say I was not as comfortable on clay as I am now, as I started to feel last year. ... Of course, we're both different players now."

Certainly are. And the stakes in their second matchup at Roland Garros are considerably different from that 2016 meeting, too: Kenin, a 21-year-old from Florida, and Swiatek, a 19-year-old from Poland, will face each other Saturday in the French Open women's final.

Swiatek (pronounced Shvee-ON'-tek) is No.54, making her the lowest-ranked woman to get this far at the tournament since the WTA computer rankings began in 1975. She seeks her first Grand Slam

as he dismissed opener Shikhar Dhawan (5) in the second over for his first wicket in the Powerplay this year. DC slipped to 42/2 in 4.2 overs after losing Prithvi Shaw.

Jaiswal then run out Shreyas Iyer with a brilliant direct throw with Delhi slumping to 51/3 at the end of powerplay. However, some good innings in the second half of the innings helped DC go past 180-run mark.

BRIEF SCORES: Delhi Capitals 184/8 (Shimron Hetmyer 45, Marcus Stoinis 39; Jofra Archer 3/24) beat Rajasthan Royals 138 (Rahul Tewatia 38, Yashasvi Jaiswal 34; Kagiso Rabada 3/35, Marcus Stoinis 2/17, R Ashwin 2/22) by 46 runs.



Sofia Kenin



title; in six previous appearances, her best showing was the fourth round.

Kenin, who is seeded No.4, is bidding for her second big trophy of the season, after triumphing at the Australian Open in February, part of a 16-1 mark at the majors in 2020.

Kenin needed to get through three sets to win four of her half-dozen matches in Paris, an indication of some occasional lapses in form, perhaps, but also of her boundless resilience and grit.

Swiatek's progress through the surprise-filled draw over the past two weeks has been as impressive as can be.

If the chill and rain of the autumnal setting - the French Open was postponed from May-June to

September-October because of the coronavirus pandemic - or the lack of loud crowds - only 1,000 fans are allowed on the grounds each day, also on account of COVID-19 concerns - or the dearth of match

play - the women's tour returned from a five-month hiatus in August - bothered others, those factors were irrelevant to Swiatek.

Not only hasn't she dropped a set so far - no woman has won the title here without conceding at least one since Justine Henin back in 2007 - but Swiatek allowed her six opponents to combine for just 23 games in 12 sets.

The lopsided results included 6-1, 6-2 victories over both 2018 champion Simona Halep and 2019 runner-up Marketa Vondrousova, and a 6-3, 6-2 win over 2014 Wimbledon finalist Eugenie Bouchard.

She is young enough, remember, that she recently finished high school. Swiatek says she needs to figure out whether to continue to pursue her education or stick to professional tennis.



Iga Swiatek

Padmini in eves' team for Asian Online Chess



AGENCIES

Chennai, Oct 9: Odisha chess star Padmini Rout is among the women players for the Asian Online Nations (Regions) Cup Team Championship, beginning Saturday. The tournament will conclude with the finals October 25.

The Indian men and women teams will start as favourites in the tournament. The top-seeded women's team includes Bhakti Kulkarni, WGM Mary Ann Gomes, Padmini, R Vaishali and PV Nandhidhaa, and is the highest rated among 31 nations taking part.

Grandmaster Surya Sekhar Ganguly will lead the men's team which also include B Adhiban, Nihal Sarin, SP Sethuraman and K Sasikiran. However GM

Viswanthan Anand is not taking part in this event.

The Indian squad is the highest ranked among the 39 teams and is the top seed followed by Kazakhstan and Iran. Apart from India, Iran along with Kazakhstan and Indonesia are likely to be among the contenders for the top prize.

The Indians had last month won the gold medal in the FIDE Online Olympiad. Three members of the triumphant squad-Sarin, Bhakti and Vaishali will be seen in action in the Asian team event.

The tournament will be played on nine-round Swiss System preliminaries in both men's and women's division with a time control of 15 minutes + 5 seconds increment.

The top eight teams will qualify to the knockout stage of quarter-finals, semifinals and finals.

Rafa juggernaut continues

REUTERS

Paris, Oct 9: Rafa Nadal moved within one win of a record-equalling 20th Grand Slam title by reaching the French Open final with a comfortable 6-3, 6-3, 7-6(7-0) victory over Diego Schwartzman Friday.

Nadal was beaten by the 12th seed a little over two weeks ago on the clay courts in Rome but the 12-time French Open champion showed he was still the undisputed king of Roland Garros as he notched up a 10th win in 11 meetings over the Argentine.

"Two and a half weeks ago, I lost in Rome," Nadal said in an on-court interview. "I'm happy the way I played, how I've improved, today was a very positive win for me."

A victory Sunday for the 34-year-old left-hander, against either World No.1 Novak Djokovic or fifth-seeded Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas, will tie him with Roger Federer's men's singles record of 20 major titles.

The Spaniard reached his 13th French Open final without dropping a set in this year's edition.

Schwartzman, playing his first Grand Slam semifinal, had two breakpoints in the opening game but Nadal saved both to win the game after battling for 14 minutes.

The Spaniard went on to break the Argentine twice in each of the first two sets. The duo traded double service breaks in the third set before Nadal aced the tiebreak without losing a point. Schwartzman

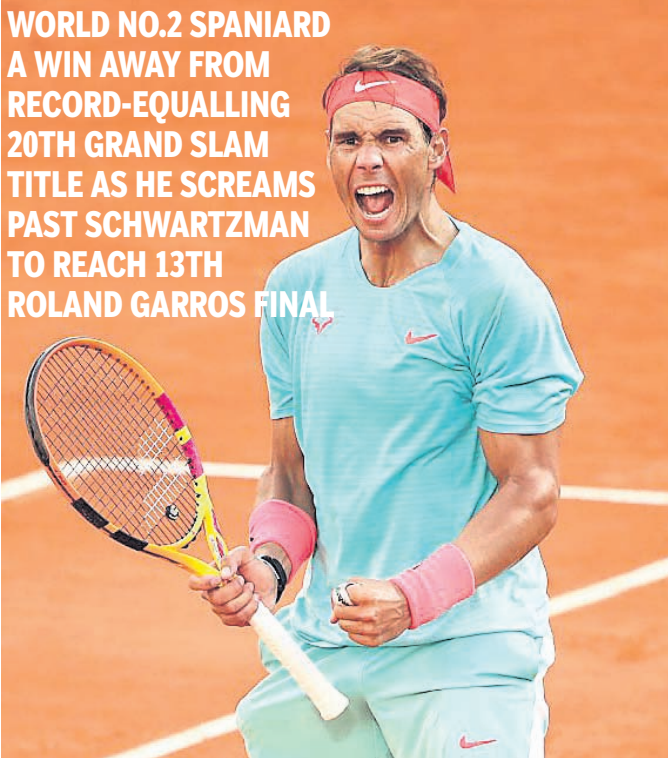
found the net with a return to hand Nadal victory in three hours and nine minutes.

"It's a very difficult year, thank you everyone for coming," said Nadal, who hit 38 winners during the contest. "With these conditions it's very difficult, and it's still in-

credible to be in the final again. Thanks to my team, my family. It's a beautiful moment for me."

Schwartzman had his chances but could convert only three of his 12 breakpoint chances against the Spaniard, who raised his level under pressure.

WORLD NO.2 SPANIARD A WIN AWAY FROM RECORD-EQUALLING 20TH GRAND SLAM TITLE AS HE SCREAMS PAST SCHWARTZMAN TO REACH 13TH ROLAND GARROS FINAL



Rafa Nadal reacts after beating Diego Schwartzman in Paris, Friday

Messi penalty helps Argentina beat rivals

REUTERS

Buenos Aires, Oct 9: Argentina got their World Cup qualifying campaign off to the perfect start Thursday when Lionel Messi's early penalty gave them a 1-0 win over Ecuador in a lacklustre match here.

The Argentine FA piped fan noise around the empty Bombonera stadium and the chants of 'Messi! Messi!' were vindicated as early as the 12th minute when he put Argentina ahead from the spot after Lucas Ocampos was fouled inside the penalty area.

Argentina had lost just one of their last eight World Cup qualifiers against Ecuador and although they could not add to the scoreline they never looked in danger of losing in a scrappy game against limited opponents.

With the South American qualifiers twice pushed back from the scheduled start in March, it was almost a year since either team had played a full international and Messi said that inaction contributed to the poor spectacle.

The three points, however, were more than welcome for a side that hasn't won a major title since lifting the Copa America in 1993.

The win, which extended Argentina's unbeaten run to eight



Lionel Messi scores from the spot against Ecuador

games under coach Lionel Scaloni, was also positive given that seven of the starting line-up had never played a World Cup qualifier previously.

Argentina's next game is Tuesday against Bolivia in La Paz, while Ecuador return home to face Uruguay, who beat Chile 2-1 in their opener earlier Thursday the same day.

The top four teams in South America's 10-team group qualify automatically for Qatar 2022 and the fifth-placed side goes into an inter-regional playoff.